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DUNALLAN;
OR
KNOW WHAT YOU JUDGE;
A STORY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

by Grace Reesman.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE DECISION,"
"FATHER CLEMENT," &c. &c.

VOL. I.

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DUNALLAN, &c.

CHAPTER I.

“OH, gentle sleep! thou art, indeed, frightened away,” exclaimed Catharine Dunallan, after a night spent in vain efforts to attain that repose which had seldom before deserted her, and to banish from her thoughts the idea of the approaching day. On that day she was, for the first time since her childhood, to see her destined husband. He was her relation, though a distant one, and heir to her father’s title, which descended only in the male line. To preserve this title, and the estates of both families undivided, had been equally the ambition of Catharine’s father and of the father of her destined husband.

Lord Dunallan had obtained a promise from his daughter, when very young, to agree to his wishes on this subject. She had then loved him

with all the ardour of nearly undivided affection, and would readily have promised any thing he had chosen to ask ; but as her understanding improved, and she found that in the society, limited as it was, in which her father permitted her to mix, she liked and disliked with almost equal warmth, she became painfully aware of the selfishness and injustice which had induced him thus to sacrifice, perhaps, the whole happiness of his only child to his own ambitious views ; and she looked forward with dread to an event which would unite her for ever to a being she might detest ; yet she loved her father so tenderly, that it was painful to her to indulge a thought injurious to him. The evil day, too, had always seemed at a distance, for the young Dunallan had been long abroad, and, during wars and revolutions, had found means to travel through countries where few peaceful travellers had dared to venture. His love for this wandering life had seemed to increase ; and Catharine, who knew that his father had obtained a similar promise from him, to that which she had given to Lord Dunallan, suspected in secret, that repugnance to this unchosen marriage was the cause of his banishing himself from his country. At last, however, his father was taken dangerously ill. Dunallan was written for—instantly hurried home,

and arrived in time to soothe the last hours of his parent.

Lord Dunallan wrote to his young relative on the death of his father, and soon received an answer to his letter, which concluded thus :

“ My father’s last moments were disturbed by his anxiety for the completion of a scheme formed by your Lordship and himself, to unite the title and fortunes of our families. He informed me that Miss Dunallan had consented to this union of interests. Urged by him at such a moment, I could have no choice. In six months, therefore, if I live, I shall have the honour of waiting on your Lordship, wherever you choose, to fulfil my part of the engagement.”

Lord Dunallan was extremely displeased with this letter. His pride and affection for his daughter had almost triumphed over his love of family—but old ideas soon returned—it was in human nature, he wisely recollected, particularly in youth, to despise what was easily obtained. He determined to seem less anxious about this first wish of his heart, and then Dunallan would see its advantages. He did not write to him again for some time, then hoped, he said, soon to see his young relation, he flattered himself he might call him his young friend : but let him come as a friend and relation. His daughter

was his companion and solace. The thought of separation was so painful, he wished he could forget it for ever.

To this letter he received no answer till within a few days of the expiration of the six months, when Dunallan announced his intention of waiting on Lord Dunallan early in the ensuing week: and requested in gentler terms than formerly, though still cold, that in a few weeks Miss Dunallan might be permitted to return with him to Arnmore; or that he might be informed of her wishes, which he should feel himself bound to acquiesce in if possible. "Business of importance," added he, "calls me to London, perhaps abroad, and possibly for years. Wherever duty may call me, however, I beg Miss Dunallan may be assured, that the choice of her own residence shall only require the sanction of her father to secure my assent."

It would be vain to attempt describing the state of Catharine's feelings during the few days which intervened between that on which her father gave her this letter to read, and the morning of the day on which Dunallan was expected.

"My dreams of happiness have passed away for ever," thought she, as she slowly dressed; then, throwing open the window to breathe the freshness of the morning, she, for a time, forgot

all her griefs while gazing at the scene before her. The sun had just risen. She had seldom seen its first rays before, and the woods, the distant mountains, and still misty lake, appeared more than usually beautiful. Almost unconscious of existence, she watched the brightening scene, till at last recalled to herself by some one softly entering her apartment. She turned round. "My Elizabeth! how kind! but this is too early. You cannot have recovered from the fatigues of yesterday."

Her cousin assured her she was perfectly recovered; and, having heard her window opened, she suspected that sleep had equally forsaken both. "And you know, dear Catharine," added she, "you promised if I would go quietly to bed last night, you would satisfy my curiosity completely this morning; so now, we shall have two hours to converse about every thing before a creature is awake."

"Oh! Elizabeth, every thing I have to converse about is disagreeable. I cannot find an idea to rest upon that is not painful. Even that scene, (pointing from the window,) even that is painful, for it reminds me of the cause of my being obliged to become for ever the companion of a man who regards our union with repugnance; whose affections are probably possessed by another; and

whose character, even if that is not the case, is just what I detest. Oh! that I could give him those woods and fields without myself. I should find nature beautiful any where were I only free; and how many thousand times more valuable should I esteem the heart which I could win, were I a portionless girl."

Elizabeth sighed, but remained silent for a moment. "Tell me, dear Catharine," said she, "why is Mr. Dunallan's character so disagreeable to you? and why did you never mention this in your late letters to me?"

"Because—I cannot very well tell why. There is just a something in all I hear of him that I dislike. You know, Elizabeth, of the letters he wrote to my father—so stiff, so formal, and cold. I thought them quite insulting."

"It is plain," replied Elizabeth, "that he feels himself forced to marry, and that he spurns this force upon his inclinations; but, dear Catharine, I do not feel very anxious about this. When he sees and knows you, he will love his father's memory for the very thing he now most revolts at."

"Dear Elizabeth, has my father been tutoring you? You use his very words; and when you use them, I will say they are very foolish. Can you think that a man who has been travelling all over Europe—in France, Italy, Poland, in short,

wherever agreeable women are to be met with—will find a simple country girl, who has scarcely ever associated with any but neighbours as simple as herself, so irresistibly charming? Particularly, too, when that girl is so prejudiced against him, that any agreeable qualities she may have will be invisible; for, you know, my face betrays all my feelings?”

“I know, my dear Catharine, that this very expressiveness of countenance, which makes you unable to conceal any thing, is the very charm which I think irresistible.”

“Particularly when my face will say, ‘Mr. Dunallan, you are hateful to me, and have been so for years.’”

“But tell me why he is so hateful to you? and why have you been so secret with me on this subject?”

“Well, I will; but I have so much to tell you I do not know where to begin. I am sure, however, you will feel as I do when you know all. You remember when I was a child, and he a boy about fourteen, that he then disliked me, and we quarrelled continually.”

“But, Catharine, you surely cannot allow yourself to be prejudiced by what passed then: you, a spoiled, self-willed, domineering little girl; and he a thoughtless, rambling boy.”

“ Never thoughtless, Elizabeth; always solemn and considerate, even then. I do not, however, form my opinion of him on such trifling grounds. I only remind you of this, to show you that naturally we do not suit each other; for even children discover what is agreeable to them in other children. Think what you choose about that, however, I have enough besides to tell you. I ought to begin, I believe, by informing you that he professes being extremely religious, much more so than other people, and is very gloomy and strict. He is called the ‘ Saint of Arnmore,’ by the gentlemen of his own county. You shall judge whether his actions are quite consistent with these pretensions. You know, I believe, how uncommonly tender his father’s affection was for him; yet nothing would prevail on Dunallan to remain at home. I myself heard the old gentleman say, that he had intreated him only to name his wishes, and that he would consent to them. He offered him his largest estate, or both estates, while he himself should only retain a moderate annuity; but not all this eagerness for his society, in his only surviving parent, could induce this cold and self-willed being to remain, even for a few months in the year, at home; and yet he made a disgusting parade of visiting prisons, relieving distress, and representing to the different

authorities wherever he went, the defects and abuses which he detected; while his father, in bad health and retirement, was left to the care of mercenaries."

"Shameful hypocrisy!" exclaimed Elizabeth. "I have heard of his benevolence and charities; and his kindness to myself when a child, and ill treated by your governess, had rather impressed me in his favour, but this trait in his character is indeed very bad."

"I have more to tell you, my dear Elizabeth. After his father's death, Dunallan dismissed every servant in the house, some of whom had lived with old Mr. Dunallan for more than twenty years; and did not give the smallest present or reward, to any one of them, excepting to a very young and pretty girl, who had only been a few weeks in the house, to whom he gave money, and with it, hypocritical being, a Bible!"

"Shocking! But how do you know all this?"

"From the young girl herself. She came all the way from her father's cottage at Arnmore, to ask me to take her into my service; and very wisely thought that these proofs of Dunallan's partiality would recommend her to me, as, she said, she knew my 'Ladyship' was going to be married to Mr. Dunallan."

"And what is become of her?"

“ I immediately sent her back to her father. I dreaded extremely that Dunallan should suppose I was making any inquiries respecting him ; for though I must feel interested in all I hear of him, I have never sought for any information. All I have heard has been by accident, excepting his opinion of myself, which I believe, was purposely left for me to read, by our acquaintance Mrs. Lennox.”

“ Mrs. Lennox ! you surely know how to appreciate any thing she says ?”

“ Oh, certainly I do : but this letter was addressed to her son, and was from Dunallan himself.”

“ But Mrs. Lennox would do any thing, my dear Catharine, to break off your marriage, in the hope that you might be won by the charms of her stupid George.”

“ Yes ; but George is very different from his mother, and has no preference for me. I know he is engaged to another, and this letter was the means of putting me in possession of his secret. About two years since, when I was on a visit at Mrs. Lennox’s, she gave me a book which I had wished to read. In this book I found folded, and laid in, as if for a mark, a sheet of written paper. I had seen the book lying in the breakfast parlour, and it never occurred to me that it

could be any thing but a quotation from it : and as I read, I supposed it a character depicted for the use, or rather warning of young ladies, to whom the book was addressed. I almost remember the words, I have thought so often of them since. It began thus,—‘ She was, when a child, violent and self-willed ; careless of all around her, if she attained her own object. Unchecked by any one, her faults, from all I hear, have strengthened with her years : and now she is the opposite of what, in my eyes, is lovely, or loveable in woman. I allow, my friend, that when joined to feminine softness, talents in women are very desirable, and greatly increase their power of charming ; but without that softness, they are very disagreeable to me : in short, I see, and thank you for the kindness of your intentions, but I cannot feel reconciled to my proposed union with Miss Dunallan.’ Here, my dear, Elizabeth, I stopped, as I perceived I had by mistake been reading a letter from—it was easy to guess whom. I immediately went in search of Mrs. Lennox, and said I had inadvertently read a letter addressed to her son. Before she could possibly have seen what I held in my hand, she exclaimed, ‘ Oh ! what have I done ! You have found Mr. Dunallan’s letter to George. What shall I do ! George will never forgive me.’

George fortunately entered the room at that moment, and as I saw Mrs. Lennox was merely affecting to dread her son's displeasure, I told him of my mistake, showed him what I had read, and assured him, as he really appeared distressed at my having seen this character of myself, that I thought it fortunate I had, as I might correct the faults imputed to me. George took an early opportunity of imparting to me his own views and wishes. He saw his mother's plans for him, and dreaded that I might suspect he had entered into them. I have felt as a sister for George ever since that day: but I must not now spend time in talking of him. Tell me, Elizabeth, do you think it possible for me to look forward to a connection for life with this man without dread?"

Elizabeth shook her head, but remained silent.

"I believe," continued Catharine, "you agree with me in thinking what I have already told you, sufficient to take away all hopes of happiness from such an union: yet this is not all. I have described him as a son, and as a master; I have still to make you acquainted with him as a friend and a brother. You have met with Mr. Clanmar. You know that he and Dunallan were educated together when boys. They afterwards travelled together in Holland, Germany, and

other countries. You have heard that Mr. Clanmar, to the inexpressible grief of his friends, brought home a young German lady as his wife, whose character suffered extremely from the suspicious circumstances attending her marriage: in short, had her first child lived, his legitimacy might have been disputed; and this marriage was brought about, the Clanmars say, by Dunallan, whose influence over young Clanmar was then unbounded. The young lady is singularly interesting, and was a mere child at the time of her marriage; so the poor Clanmars are now, in some degree, reconciled to it: but they openly declare they can never regard Mr. Dunallan but as the most detestable of hypocrites; in short, there is something worse than I know in this story, at least there are dreadful suspicions. Young Clanmar, who is universally esteemed as one of the most amiable tempered men in the world, and indeed as very perfect in every way, never mentions Dunallan's name; and though formerly so devotedly attached to him, they now have no intercourse whatever."

"Dear Catharine!" exclaimed Elizabeth, "is it possible Lord Dunallan knows all this, and yet can suffer you to be united to this man!"

"Yes, my own Elizabeth, my father knows it all; but he hates the Clanmars, who have al-

ways opposed him in the county, and supposes they have exaggerated these stories. I fear however, they are too true ; for I can see no reason for people, so remarkable for pride of birth as they are, choosing to exaggerate stories which are disgraceful to the wife of him, who will soon be the representative of their boasted family. But now, my Elizabeth, I shall tell you the history of his only sister, as we may be interrupted. She has been dead, you know, about two years, and left two children. She was older than Dunallan, and before he left Oxford, had, with her father's consent, married a young Englishman of family and fortune. It was on Dunallan's quitting Oxford, that he first showed his dislike to living at home ; and he spent much of his time in England at the house of his brother-in-law, Mr. Harcourt. For some time Mr. Harcourt continued one of the gayest and most fashionable men about London, but he gamed so deeply, that he very soon ruined his fortune. Dunallan went abroad in less than two years after leaving Oxford, and remained absent, until called to England by Harcourt's intreaties, whose creditors had become very troublesome. He so arranged matters, that Harcourt was permitted to accept of an appointment in India ; but, ever cold and unfeeling, he compelled his unfortunate sister to remain in this

country, though separation from her now unfortunate but still beloved Harcourt almost deprived her of existence. Dunallan's command of fortune, however, made him all powerful. Harcourt himself intreated his wife to remain. She died two years afterwards of a broken heart. Her children are with Dunallan, or rather with an aunt of his, whom he has got to superintend his domestic concerns, including me, I suppose. And now Elizabeth, you know his character, tell me, my real friend, what do you think I ought to do? I have given my promise to my father; I cannot retract it: but if I could delay—if I could induce Mr. Dunallan to give up his pursuit. He has the worst opinion of me. What can I do?"

Elizabeth continued silent for a few moments, then asked her friend whether she thought it quite impossible to change her father's wishes.

"Quite so, my Elizabeth. Ah, if you knew the various means I have tried in vain. I ought not to wish it," added she, rising, and bursting into tears; "I have had many happy years from his kindness; I ought not to repine at sacrificing the rest of my life to him."

"Allow me to speak on the subject to Mr. Dunallan when he arrives," said Elizabeth.

"But would that be fulfilling my promise to my father? No, no; I must go on. Come here,

my Elizabeth : look at those woods ; look at those distant mountains, and those soft hills still nearer. Look at that smooth lake, as it reflects its surrounding scenery, and tell me what you feel."

Elizabeth gazed with admiration at the glorious scene before her, and then replied, " I feel, Catharine, that I could never be very unhappy with nature around me so sweet, so sublimely beautiful and soothing ; unless I had lost for ever some beloved object, with whom I had enjoyed its charms ; or was, by some insurmountable obstacle, separated from such a friend. I have feared to ask the question, Catharine ; but there is no separation in your case, I fervently pray, which makes an union with Dunallan so dreadful to you."

" No, my dear Elizabeth ; you yourself are the dearest friend I have in the world ; and you, I hope, will be more with me than you have of late been. My father has watched over my happiness in this respect. In the limited circle in which he has allowed me to mix, there is no one for whom I feel a preference ; and I agree with you in thinking, that while I have a heart to feel, and while nature and my friend are left to me, I cannot be quite unhappy. Whatever happens, however, life is not a long affair with any of us ; par-

ticularly the miserable," added she, her eyes again filling with tears.

Elizabeth threw her arms around her friend, and wept with her, but could find no subject of consolation.

"Who is this aunt of Dunallan's?" asked she at length.

"She is the most unfortunate human creature I ever heard of," replied Catharine, "she has lost her husband, and her whole family of six children. She is talked of as a good sort of woman, but a religious enthusiast. I suppose, poor soul, her misfortunes have affected her understanding, and I feel that I ought to pity her. Yet, what a companion! Dunallan is equally gloomy and enthusiastic. Oh! my father, what a cruel choice! As he says of me, he is the complete opposite of what I could ever find it possible to love. But here comes Martin, and I must bid adieu to this subject. My heart feels relieved by conversing with you, my own Elizabeth; but, perhaps, if I am not to appear very unhappy to my father, it will be necessary to avoid in future such softening intercourse."

Elizabeth agreed; and embracing each other, as if in giving up this soothing confidence, they had given up their last consolation, Elizabeth left her young friend with the wondering Martin, who

had come earlier than usual to call her lady on this eventful day.

Martin had suspected, however, that Mr. Dunallan's arrival was no cause of joy to her young mistress. Catharine's early rising, and the tears in her eyes, confirmed her suspicions, and made her less unwilling to agree to her lady's determination to wear a very plain morning dress.

Catharine had no desire to please Mr. Dunallan. If she could have concealed her face, or deprived it of the power of expression, she would have been more satisfied. She had an additional cause of uneasiness in the numerous spectators who must witness her feelings. Lord Dunallan, from a dread of his daughter's gentle submissive looks, and melancholy sweetness of manners, which were now the only means she used to induce him to pity her; and perhaps from a dread of his own feelings, when about to part from a child he loved next to his family and name, had invited the neighbouring families in succession for several weeks. To none of them had Catharine imparted her dislike to her approaching marriage; and though the younger part wondered at their beautiful companion thus agreeing, like one of the royal family to be united to a person she had scarcely ever seen; and the elder envied the father who had so submissive a child; yet both

ascribed this submission to pride, and the same love of family so remarkable in Lord Dunallan. Catharine had perceived this, and the idea of their observing all her actions thus prejudiced, chilled and discouraged her: yet she resolved not to transfer their disapprobation from herself to her father by the slightest hint of the truth.

CHAPTER II.

LORD DUNALLAN was alone in the breakfast room when Catharine entered. He received her with tenderness; kissed her forehead; and pressed her hurriedly to his bosom; glanced at her pale countenance; then saying he had forgot something, (she did not hear what,) he left her: but she heard him sigh deeply, which brought tears into her eyes, and confirmed her determination to conceal from him and every one else the dejection she felt.

Elizabeth soon joined her, and then Mrs. Lennox, her son George, and Rose his sister: the St. Clairs of the Isle, Sir Archibald and Lady Cameron of Glenmore, their son, and two daughters.

Every eye during breakfast was turned towards Catharine. Elizabeth endeavoured to divert the attention of the party, by proposing plans of amusement for the day, and this in some degree succeeded.

“Miss Dunallan has expressed no preference,”

said young St. Clair at last. "Miss Dunallan, I know you are fond of riding. Shall we ride?"

"Oh no! dear Miss Dunallan," exclaimed Rose Lennox, "do consent to the sailing party."

"But if Catharine prefers riding," said Miss Cameron.

"We can ride first," replied Catharine, "and then sail. The day is charming; we shall have time for both, if we order the horses immediately."

The horses were soon ready; and the younger visitors of the party set off, all gay, and in expectation of enjoyment. *She* only was sad, whom each thought had most the power of being happy.

Young St. Clair assisted Catharine to mount her horse. He had observed the dejection, which she in vain attempted to conceal, and his manner showed her that he had. He put the reins into her hand, but laid his arm on the neck of the horse. "He is very gentle," said he, stroking him.

"Yes," replied Catharine, "he obeys the slightest touch of the reins."

St. Clair looked earnestly but tenderly at Catharine, and said in a low voice, "You, Miss Dunallan, will always find it so with all whom

you condescend to guide, or lead,—or love,” added he, in a still lower voice.

Catharine looked languidly away, bowed coldly, and rode on.

Catharine had willingly agreed to the wishes of her young friends, because she hoped she would, while riding or sailing, forget herself and her griefs; but though the day was charming, and her companions increased in gaiety, she could not banish thought, and became every moment more sad.

The lake was smooth, and the air soft and balmy; the surrounding scenery even more than usually beautiful; yet Catharine thought only of her approaching meeting with her hated cousin; and the time they continued to sail seemed tedious, though she dreaded its termination. At last they landed at a short distance from the castle. St. Clair offered his arm to Catharine. Elizabeth walked on her other side, and on turning round a part of the wood, they came in sight of the house, at the entrance to which a travelling carriage had just stopped. Catharine looked eagerly towards it, until she saw a gentleman, of a tall and graceful figure, alight rather slowly from it, and her father advance to meet him. She supposed it was Dunallan, and becoming as pale as death, she involuntarily shrunk back. St. Clair

who felt her tremble violently, intreated her to sit down on a garden seat near where they stood. "We have had such a fatiguing day," said he, "I am surprised at any lady having strength for such exertions." Catharine trembled so excessively, that she was obliged for a few moments to comply with his request. Annoyed, however, by the looks and attentions of St. Clair, and by the inquiries of the rest of the party, who soon joined them, she struggled to regain composure, and leaning on Elizabeth's arm, again proceeded towards the house. St. Clair intreated her to lean on him, but she coldly declined his offer, and looking back for Rose Lennox, who instantly came to her, put her arm within hers, and in a whisper begged her to remain near her.

Lord Dunallan and the stranger now approached. Catharine dared not raise her eyes, but became very pale, and trembled violently.

"It is Mr. Dunallan, whispered Elizabeth, "I recollect him perfectly. He looks very mild." Catharine remained silent. The rest of the party were walking before, and Lord Dunallan first introduced Dunallan to them, then approaching. "Catharine, my love, your cousin. Elizabeth, you remember Mr. Dunallan." Catharine looked up for a moment; Dunallan's eyes were mildly fixed upon her; her's fell under his, and she

blushed deeply. She felt ashamed of the appearance of bashful timidity, which she was conscious must be the impression her silence and blushes would convey to Dunallan; yet she could not speak; but recollecting all she had heard of him, and her own situation, contempt, pride, and dislike of his character regained their influence; and, though silent, she walked on with her head raised, and her eyes looking down with an expression of great haughtiness. Dunallan entered into conversation with Elizabeth. The very tone of his voice was disagreeable to Catharine; because so different from what she expected it to be from the person she had so long pictured in her imagination. It was singularly mild and low.

“I have travelled in so many climates, and been exposed to such scorching suns, that I am surprised and flattered at your recollecting me, Miss Murray; yet I believe it is the expression of a friend’s countenance we remember. I should have known you also, had I seen you smile.”

“And Miss Dunallan, should you have known her?” asked Elizabeth.

“I believe not:” then looking past Elizabeth for a moment, “Yes, Miss Dunallan is less changed than I thought, the first moment I had the pleasure of seeing her.”

Catharine pressed Elizabeth's arm ; for Dunallan breathed a short sigh after saying this.

Elizabeth was not surprised at his sigh, when she looked at Catharine ; for she had no idea her friend could look so little agreeable.

They walked on for a short way in silence. Dunallan then remarked the improvements which had taken place around Dunallan Castle during his absence.

" Can you admire our poor Scotland, after having visited Italy and Switzerland ?" asked Elizabeth.

" I have seen no scenery *to me* more beautiful than what now surrounds me since I left Scotland," replied Dunallan ; " That at Arnmor only surpasses it," added he, smiling.

" Yours is a very happy taste, Mr. Dunallan," said Catharine, in rather an ironical tone of voice.

" Is it so unfortunate as to differ from yours, Miss Dunallan ?"

" I certainly have never seen any place I preferred to Dunallan Castle," replied Catharine, " but I have never been out of Scotland, and imagine I should admire the scenery of some other countries still more, unless their describers greatly flatter them."

" I believe," answered Dunallan, " that even

after you have seen those countries, you will not condemn my taste."

Catharine made no reply.

The party soon reached the house, and as it was late, separated to dress for dinner. Catharine followed Elizabeth to her room.

"Well, my dear Elizabeth, you see we have differed in opinion already."

"Yes, dear Catharine; but I must have you to lay aside that expression of haughtiness; and that contemptuous tone of voice. You provoke hostility."

"But I cannot help it, Elizabeth, and I confess you surprised me by entering so cordially into conversation with a person who you know has so many faults, and of whom you yourself expressed so bad an opinion before you met."

"I really had forgot for a time, what you told me, dear Catharine, there is something so singularly sincere and pleasing in his looks and manner."

"I have not looked at him yet," replied Catharine, "and cannot so soon forget his father or his sister, or his friend; but good bye, Elizabeth, I wish I *could* forget, and feel some of the complacency for him which you do."

When Catharine entered the drawing-room before dinner, she found most of the party as-

sembled. A glance around the room, however, told her that Dunallan was not there. She felt relieved, and joined Mrs. Lennox and others, who were examining some prints which Lord Dunallan had just received from London. Catharine accepted of a seat placed for her by St. Clair, who protested against her standing after having suffered so much from fatigue. As the prints were in a large volume, it was impossible to see them when sitting. St. Clair and young Cameron therefore supported the book, so as to place the prints in an advantageous situation. Lady Cameron and Mrs. St. Clair chose to stand behind Catharine. Elizabeth, Rose, and the others, also stood near her, while she, thrown back in her chair, scarcely conscious of what passed, languidly expressed her opinion, which was constantly appealed to by all the party. Dunallan entered during this scene. Catharine did not immediately change her attitude, but turned her eyes towards the door. Dunallan stood for a moment near the party, then, with a look of displeasure, turned away, and joined Lord Dunallan, who was standing in a window, absorbed in his own thoughts. Catharine felt her face glow, and leant forward to conceal it. Dunallan's was the same indignant glance which she used to dread when a child, because she always

knew she deserved it. Now she was unconscious of its cause. She soon, however, recollected his opinion of her; proud, selfish, spoiled by prosperity; and she supposed her looks conveyed to him these impressions, surrounded by adulation as she was at that moment. "But what right has he," thought she, "to restrain or to dictate to me?" She raised her head, and again leaning back in her chair, began to talk to St. Clair, who, all animation and attention, watched and read her expressive countenance.

"Have you seen those prints, Mr. Dunallan?" asked his Lordship, approaching the table.

Dunallan followed slowly, and stood behind Rose.

"Beautiful!" exclaimed Catharine, when the next print was shown. "Beautiful!" exclaimed every one except Dunallan.

"Mr. Dunallan, do you not think it beautiful?" asked Rose.

"I have seen the original painting," replied Dunallan, "and I think the print might have been much better."

"I too have seen the original painting," said St. Clair, "but must still agree with Miss Dunallan in thinking the print exquisitely fine."

Dunallan was silent.

Another print was shown.

“That is surely very fine,” said Rose. To me it appears beautiful.”

“It is so,” said Dunallan, “and does justice to the painting from which it has been taken.”

“Particularly that part,” remarked Catharine, pointing to the foreground, which was very unmeaning.

“No,” replied Dunallan in a calm voice, “but the painter of that piece is famous for his distances, while his foregrounds are always defective. Miss Lennox’s taste is perfectly correct in admiring that part of the print to which she pointed.”

“Oh,” said Rose, “Catharine and I are both right.”

Many more prints were turned over, but Catharine gave no opinion; and St. Clair seemed so much inclined to dispute whatever Dunallan said, that she felt quite relieved when dinner was announced.

The day passed on. Catharine felt constrained by being conscious that she was observed by every one. She dreaded that her looks should betray her feelings. She wished to appear not unhappy to her father; yet, in making this attempt, she feared that the calm, and as she thought, very proud-looking Dunallan, might suppose she was pleased with her future pros-

pects, which she felt became more alarming to her every time she ventured to think. These contending feelings gave to her countenance an expression of abstraction and uneasiness; while her indifference, and careless answers to those around her, by whom she was accustomed to be treated with a deference and attention which had unconsciously led her to disregard all they said, gave her the appearance of a dissatisfied spoiled child. Her eyes often met Dunallan's, and each time the expression of his seemed to increase in disapprobation, and she thought even in contempt. Catharine felt this extremely. Adulation endeavours to soothe, if she was out of temper; and solicitude to discover her wishes, she was always accustomed to, and scarcely perceived; but, excepting from Elizabeth, or her own heart, she seldom saw a look, or heard a word of reproof. Every family in the neighbourhood had wished, in some way, to connect her with them. Of high birth, and immense fortune, very beautiful, and, in general, amiable in temper, she was indisputably the most charming and most admired young lady in that part of the country. Her father's intention of uniting her to her cousin was well known; but, at the same time, all who were acquainted with her character supposed, that, though disengaged affections, and pride of family, might

lead her to agree to her father's wishes before she saw the person proposed, that if she disliked him, nothing would induce her to proceed. Dunallan's long absence, and Lord Dunallan's ill-concealed displeasure, had increased their hopes. Mrs. Lennox felt certain that George, from the affectionate manner in which Catharine treated him, was not indifferent to her. The St. Clairs thought their Arthur irresistible, where there was no other engagement; and so did St. Clair, who was extremely handsome, and almost as much admired by the ladies as Catharine was by the other sex. Poor young Cameron was too modest to think himself worthy of such an angel; yet every gentle look she bestowed on him was the foundation of a day dream,—so delightful, that its demolition by her next look of total indifference equalled it in wretchedness. He lingered still near her, though he a thousand times determined to separate himself as far as the antipodes from her bewitching smiles, and killing indifference. His mother knew of his passion, and endeavoured to gain Catharine's confidence by every gentle and winning method, and to recommend her son, by her constant praises of his excellence as a son and a brother. The Miss Camerons looked up to Catharine as the model of all perfection, and paid her the deference of the heart. Mrs. Len-

nox flattered her. Rose really loved, and was really loved by her. Lord Dunallan was quite satisfied, however, that none of these young men, nor their friends, had made any impression on Catharine's heart; and felt rather gratified, that Dunallan should see the devotion of these families, the heirs of whom each possessed fortunes twice as large as his. Lord Dunallan watched Catharine's looks on this day. She saw that he did; and also that he was anxious to make all go on smoothly. But it would not do. St. Clair seemed to watch every opportunity of disputing with Dunallan, or of making him appear ridiculous, which, from his natural quickness, and very frequently exercised talent for satire, he generally found himself able to do whenever he attempted it with others. Dunallan's calmness, his temperate replies, and his unmoved politeness, were however too much for St. Clair, and he evidently lost his temper.

"Let us have some music, my love," said Lord Dunallan to his daughter. "Mr. Dunallan, I suppose, prefers Italian to any other." "No, my Lord, I prefer Scotch," said Dunallan. "Indeed! Is it possible for one who has travelled to preserve a taste so simple?"

"My taste is very simple, my Lord. In music

I prefer that with which I can associate some pleasing idea."

"And is Scotland so happy as to have inspired your most pleasing ideas, Mr. Dunallan?" asked St. Clair with affected simplicity.

"More so than Italy, at least," replied Dunallan. "There is a charm, to be sure, in the idea of *home* to every one," said St. Clair.

Dunallan for the first time seemed moved. "I did not say *home*," replied he. "You, Mr. St. Clair, know I could not *mean* it."

There was an expression of so much pain, as well as displeasure, in Dunallan's countenance, when he said this, that Catharine felt touched. She addressed him in a gentle tone of voice, and, though he did not instantly regain his composure, they soon entered into conversation. They talked first about music, and Catharine played and sung whatever he wished. He continued near her during the rest of the evening, and though in conversation he often differed from her in opinion, and his looks expressed less of that pleasure and admiration with which she was generally listened to, than curiosity, and a wish to read her mind in her countenance, yet she felt, when they parted for the night, that his look was not one of disapprobation.

"I will not stay a moment with you, dear Ca-

tharine," said Elizabeth, following her into her apartment, "for you are quite worn out; only tell me in one word, are you not more pleased than you expected?"

"You need not be so careful of me, dear Elizabeth, I shall not soon sleep."

"Well; but answer me."

"I cannot answer you, Elizabeth. He is quite different from what I expected."

"Do not you find him very agreeable in manner?"

"Oh! agreeable and polished enough to make me certain he will despise my defects."

"Ridiculous! Your defects, Catharine. But good night. I see you think as I do."

Catharine again declared she could not sleep. But Elizabeth insisted on leaving her; and though at first a thousand confused and interesting thoughts kept her awake, they soon assumed the form of dreams, and these were lost in more profound sleep.

CHAPTER III.

NEXT morning at breakfast, Lord Dunallan said, that if his friends would excuse him, he wished to pay a visit in the neighbourhood, which would detain him all the forenoon, and he was anxious before his departure, to discover whether there was any plan of amusement arranged for the day. Every one declared they would find amusement for themselves, and begged his Lordship to take no charge of them.

“Catharine, my love,” said Lord Dunallan, “you will show your cousin the additions I have made to the library.” This particular charge of her cousin committed to Catharine, brought a blush over her countenance, and an expression of displeasure.

Dunallan looked for her answer. She only bowed her assent very coldly.

“I believe, my Lord, I ought to relieve Miss Dunallan from this task, and accompany your Lordship part of the way. I wish to call on my young friend Clanmar.”

“Clanmar ! exclaimed Catharine, quite thrown off her guard by surprise.

Dunallan looked for an explanation. Catharine blushed deeply. “I thought—I supposed—I did not know—I had been led to believe”—and she stopped.

“I believe I understand you, Miss Dunallan. You had been led to believe, that Mr. Clanmar had reason to think himself injured by me, under the mask of friendship.”

Catharine blushed again still more deeply ; but was silent. There was something about Dunallan that quite deprived her of all presence of mind. Every look, every word he uttered, every expression of his open and animated countenance, was in direct contradiction to the character she had formed of him in idea ; and his plain avowal of the truth on this occasion left her unable to say a word. She was relieved by Mrs. Lennox, who said, “One hears such stories of all one’s friends, that it is necessary to believe absolutely nothing.”

“Would it not be better, Mrs. Lennox, asked Dunallan, “to discover from our friends themselves whether there is any truth in such stories ? if there is, our advice may be of use ; if not, we may put our friend on his guard, or assist him in disproving them.”

“Your theory is beautiful, Mr. Dunallan, said

Mrs. Lennox, "but I fear impracticable; for the first consequence of telling a friend that such a one said so and so of him, would be a challenge; and I believe Mr. Dunallan is an enemy to duelling."

"Certainly," replied Dunallan, "but it is not necessary to mention names on such an occasion."

"But," said Mrs. Lennox, "I should doubt the truth of what was told me; particularly," added she, laughing, "if it detracted from my own merits, unless I was informed who said it, and all about it, every way."

"I did not advert to being disbelieved, I confess," replied Dunallan, smiling. "I have yet to learn how to act upon such an occasion."

"But the situation of gentlemen and ladies is entirely different," rejoined Mrs. Lennox, "we stand in no awe of duels; so we can politely insinuate that we suspect there has been some misstatement, some mistake of names or persons. Oh, a hundred ways, which by degrees brings us to the bottom of every thing. I am pretty certain I could discover even Mr. Dunallan's authorities, if he told me some evil story he had heard of me."

Dunallan declined entering the lists with so dangerous a person, and retired with Lord

Dunallan, who seemed rather anxious to depart. Catharine felt relieved by his absence ; and after she had engaged the rest of the party in such amusements as suited their different tastes, she retired with Elizabeth to converse with her about Dunallan, and her own hopes and fears respecting the future.

This and several other days passed away without apparently producing much difference in the feelings of any of the party. Lord Dunallan continued to press his visitors to prolong their stay, and Catharine joined her intreaties, from a dread of the party becoming so small as to force a more intimate intercourse with Dunallan, whom she found every hour more difficult to understand, and whose presence was a continual restraint to her, because, though she hardly avowed it to herself, she dreaded his opinion, and was conscious that of her it very often was unfavourable ; but though he so frequently differed from her, and even in what she esteemed trifles, showed that difference of opinion ; yet he was uniformly so gentle and polite in his manner, that she could not make herself believe he wished to offend. A thousand times in the day she would say to herself, “ Why do I dread his disapprobation ? Let him disapprove, let him abandon this heartless, interested engagement ; let him

despise me, and leave me in peace." Yet the next time she joined in conversation, or gave her opinion, her eye involuntarily glanced towards Dunallan; and if he was of the same opinion, or seemed pleased with what she had said, she felt a lightness of heart which led her on to speak, until she had said something, or laughed at, or joined in ridiculing some opinion or person undeserving of such treatment; and then Dunallan's grave expression, when every one else laughed, made her uneasy, and unable to enjoy any thing that passed.

"That stern cast-down of his eyes—that fixedly grave look, when we are only amusing ourselves," said she to Elizabeth, "is such a reflection upon us all, even upon my father, it is quite intolerable."

"Mr. St. Clair is to blame, however," replied Elizabeth, "for those reproving looks. He knows Mr. Dunallan's strict way of thinking about ridicule, and religion, and some other things; yet he always contrives to introduce these subjects into conversation in the very way to provoke Mr. Dunallan's grave looks: and I think you must allow, Catharine, that Mr. Dunallan has always the just side in an argument, and leaves Mr. St. Clair without a word to advance but some silly

piece of sophistry, or foolish jest, which only discovers the weakness of the side he has taken."

"But St. Clair is never serious," replied Catharine, "he only wishes to amuse us, while Mr. Dunallan is always so grave, and so full of wisdom, and seems so anxious to lead the conversation to wiser subjects."

"True," replied Elizabeth; "but indeed, Catharine, I greatly prefer his conversation to Mr. St. Clair's. I find it much more interesting. You know I have always found those men most agreeable, who treated us women most like equals and rational creatures. You, my dear Catharine, have been more accustomed to flattery, and admiring deference of opinion from the other sex than I have, and of course will feel the total want of this in Dunallan more than I do."

"No, Elizabeth, it is not that foolish flattery I regret; but I am not accustomed to contemptuous, and disapproving looks; and I confess I do feel them," added she, bursting into tears.

"My dearest Catharine, you entirely mistake his looks. You generally rely on what I say; and I declare that were I asked what I thought his feelings for you were, I would say, that he already felt deeply interested, and even tenderly for you."

"Dear Elizabeth," exclaimed Catharine, ris-

ing, and speaking with much emotion, "what an idea. For once you think as you wish.' Feel tenderly! Is watching every word I say, in general to differ from me, tenderness? Was that remark he made to me this morning, 'that young women of fortune seemed to forget they were responsible creatures' tenderness? He seems to consider me a spoiled child, an useless being, guided by no principle, but at the mercy of my own caprice. Oh, Elizabeth! I see he despises me; and he has taught me to despise myself; for I feel, on reflection, that his opinion of me is not unjust."

"I still think you quite mistaken, however," replied Elizabeth, "in the opinion you suppose he has formed of you. You remember the description he gave the other evening of a lady, a friend of his, Mrs. Henry Williams?"

"Perfectly, and I remember his looks when he turned to me while describing her; they said, 'Attend, silly girl; compare your aimless, trifling, useless life, with that of this truly virtuous, and religious, and marvellously active wife, and daughter, and mother, and friend, and sister, and every thing!' I shall be introduced to this paragon, Elizabeth; she lives near Arnmore, and I suppose Dunallan means me to regard her as my model; with her, schools, and cares for the

poor, "which," as he said, "did not consist in merely giving them money without inquiring into their temporal, and still more important concerns. Oh, I remember his very words !"

" But, dear Catharine, what can you condemn in his words ?"

" Oh, nothing ! I wish I could."

" But, Catharine, I was going to tell you what he said of you."

" Of me !"

" Yes." After describing Mrs. Henry Williams, he turned to me, and said in reply to my admiring praises of her character, "Your cousin, I think, greatly resembles Mrs. Williams in her natural disposition, if I have rightly judged from the little I have seen of her ; and I think would have probably been a very similar character, had she been educated in the school of adversity, like poor Mrs. Williams.

" Is it possible he said this of me ?" asked Catharine, eagerly.

" Precisely as I have repeated it," replied Elizabeth.

Catharine remained absorbed in thought for a few moments ; then awaking from her reverie, she exclaimed, " But, Elizabeth, what is become of all the unexplained evil stories we have heard of

this same unaccountable Dunallan? his father, his sister."

"Oh, they cannot be true," replied Elizabeth; "you know the history about Mr. Clanmar must be without foundation, since he called here yesterday, and seemed to regard Mr. Dunallan with the greatest affection and respect."

"He is a mystery altogether," said Catharine, gaily. "And so I am like Mrs. Williams, only I require adversity," added she, playfully; "perhaps Mr. Dunallan may supply this deficiency to me."

A few evenings after this conversation, Lord Dunallan sent to request his daughter's company in the library. Catharine dreaded this *tête à tête*, but immediately attended her father. She found him surrounded by papers. "My dear child," said he, "come and sit down by me. I wish to consult you on a subject very interesting to both of us. You know the fortune I shall leave you and your cousin will be immense. I am sure you will join me in thinking that my sister, your Elizabeth's mother, ought not to suffer inconveniencies from the narrowness of her fortune while we are so affluent. Her children are now advancing in life; and I have been thinking, that to leave each of them an independence would be most agreeable to my sister, who is rather

proud on these subjects, but who would not act contrary to the interests of her children. After your marriage, my love, I shall consider my fortune as a trust for you, therefore"——

"My dearest father," interrupted Catharine, "do not speak thus. Follow your own generous wishes. I have never thought of this. My aunt has always appeared comfortable and happy. I knew she was beloved by you. If there is any way of increasing her happiness, I intreat you do not hesitate, or think of the future."

"How you run on my Catharine. I never can get you to listen to these subjects; but now, my love, it is your duty to attend to them. The wife or the mother who disregards these matters, may bring ruin and disgrace on those most dear to her. But to return to my sister, here is the letter I have written to her, and the addition I wish to make to the fortunes of her children."

Catharine read the letter, then said, "I suppose, my dear Father, you mean the sum you have mentioned for each of my cousins."

"You are very magnificent in your ideas, my love, I mean what I have mentioned as a provision for the whole. Do you approve, my Catharine?"

"Oh, most heartily; but do, my dearest Father, make it to each."

“Pho’, child, you are foolish. But I must see Mr. Dunallan; after what has passed between his father and me, I think myself accountable to him for the way in which I spend my fortune.”

“I may go, I suppose,” said Catharine, rising.

“No, my love, stay.”

She reluctantly resumed her seat, and Dunallan soon appeared. He was informed of the business by Lord Dunallan.

“I request—I intreat, my Lord, you will never think of consulting me on such matters, nor suppose for a moment that I am capable of desiring to control your Lordship in the manner in which you choose to spend any part, or the whole of your fortune.” He was retiring. Lord Dunallan intreated him to stay.

“You will greatly oblige me, Mr. Dunallan, if you will act as the heir of my fortune—give me your opinion—let me feel that you are satisfied. You are acquainted with what passed between your Father and myself. In my situation you would feel as I do, that I cannot alienate any part of my fortune from the husband of my child without his concurrence. I beg, therefore, that on all occasions you will allow me to consult you respecting my affairs.”

He again offered the letter to Dunallan.

“Impossible, my Lord,” said he, drawing back rather coldly, “I can interfere no farther in your Lordship’s concerns than to say, that, if any transaction passed between you and my father, which your Lordship conceives gives me any title to interfere in the disposal of your fortune, you will allow me to withdraw that title by any act which can do so.”

“I know of no act, Mr. Dunallan,” replied his Lordship, proudly, “which can cancel the promises of a man of honour to a friend after the death of that friend. But it is possible to deprive myself of the pleasure I intended.”

“My Lord,” said Dunallan, “pardon me. I knew not the nature of the engagement to which you alluded. Command me—I am willing to do precisely as you wish.”

Lord Dunallan seemed unwilling to proceed in the business. Dunallan laid his hand on the letter, and looked for his Lordship’s permission to read it. He bowed coldly. Dunallan perused it carefully, then asked if Lord Dunallan would permit him to add a few words. “Certainly,” replied his Lordship, smiling in reply to Dunallan’s conciliating looks and tone of voice. Dunallan wrote a few words, and then returned the letter to his Lordship, who read the words he had written, and then presented it to Catha-

rine, and said, smiling, "I think, my love, Mr. Dunallan and you have had some secret communication about this affair."

Catharine read the words Dunallan had written—"I therefore, my dear sister, request your acceptance of the provision I have mentioned." Dunallan had added, "For each of your dear children." "I hope, my dear father, you will be persuaded by Mr. Dunallan," said Catharine, eagerly.

"But, my dear, I must sell an estate to raise this sum."

"No, my Lord," said Dunallan, "that is unnecessary, my father left—but," looking at Catharine, "your Lordship and I can settle all that at another time."

Lord Dunallan then proposed walking, as the evening was charming, and they found that the rest of the party had gone out. They walked together for some time, but at last Lord Dunallan, recollecting he had something to say to his steward, who had just passed them, he left Catharine to entertain her cousin. She had hitherto carefully avoided being left alone with Dunallan, and the more so because she had observed that he seemed rather anxious to detain her, when, notwithstanding all her care, she did happen to be found alone by him. She now looked in vain

for the rest of the party ; they were not in sight, and as she had just been admiring the beauty of the evening, and had proposed to her father that they should walk to a particular hill a good way off, she could find no pretext for leaving Dunallan. He offered his arm, and they walked on for a few moments in silence. Catharine dreaded his saying any thing which might advert to their peculiar situation, and searched in her own mind for some subject of conversation as far from it as possible, but could find none. She was relieved from her search by Dunallan, whose first question seemed to say he had been equally anxious to avoid the subject.

“ Do you generally spend the winter at Dunallan Castle, Miss Dunallan ? ”

“ Yes. We have spent two winters at Edinburgh, but all the other winters of my life have been spent at Dunallan Castle.”

“ Have you found your winters at Edinburgh pass more happily than those at Dunallan Castle ? ”

“ Not nearly so happily.”

“ Indeed ! ”

“ No, because on the whole we lived more retiredly at Edinburgh than we do here.”

“ And why so, may I be permitted to ask ? ”

Catharine hesitated. She could not tell Dun-

allan what she believed was the true cause—her father's solicitude to prevent the possibility of her forming any engagement which might prevent their future union. "My father's chief pleasures," said she at last, "consist in reading, and attending to county affairs, and the associates he prefers are either learned men, or those friends who reside in our neighbourhood. In Edinburgh, our society consisted of a few old gentlemen, Sir Hugh Cawdor, Professor B——, Dr. L——, and a few others, and one or two of our country neighbours, who went to town because we did."

"And you tired extremely."

"I did, because I knew gayer scenes, and society more suited to my taste, might easily have been enjoyed by me, had my father permitted it. Even Elizabeth, who is so much more grave and sensible than I am, used to tire of our evenings at Edinburgh, and laugh at my miserable walks with my duenna, in the meadow; for we lived in that dull part of the town called George's Square."

Dunallan smiled, and asked "whether she had never joined in any public amusement?"

"Oh yes, my father went with me as often as I chose to the Theatre; but I tired of the bad actors who are generally to be seen there. Oh

I prefer Dunallan Castle a thousand times to that stupid town, which I never could suffer till towards the spring, when I was permitted to walk, or drive about to see the beautiful views in its neighbourhood."

"You have, indeed, many sources of amusement and pleasure at this beautiful residence, Miss Dunallan, and I must compliment you on the taste you have displayed in laying out those picturesque grounds in the glen. I knew not until to-day, that the plan was entirely yours. When I was here formerly, nothing was to be seen there but woods—thick impenetrable woods."

"Ah," said Catharine, sighing, "I was greatly occupied whilst my plan was carrying into execution. I believe I was never more happy; but when it was finished, I almost wished I could have restored the thick woods again. I wearied of its new form. I then amused myself by having that little Gothic building erected, which I endeavoured, by reading many books on architecture, and by procuring numberless plans, to make very perfect. I read every day for a month or two in that peaceful retreat, and I got suitable books, and Gothic furniture; but I soon tired more there than any where else; and though I had declared my determination that *there* I should enjoy complete solitude, and must not on any ac-

count be disturbed, I soon longed for some intruder. I had my harp carried there also, but tired of the novelty of playing and singing alone. Now I scarcely ever go there but when I am in such low spirits as to hate company; and I prefer any other walk to the glen."

"Are you so very inconstant, Miss Dunallan?" asked her cousin, smiling.

Catharine blushed. She had talked on in her usual way, exactly saying what came into her head, and what was indeed the real truth; but this question, and the smile which accompanied it, recalled to her ideas how strongly this account of herself must confirm Dunallan in the opinion he had formed of her. She hesitated, then determining to affect nothing, she replied, "I suppose I *am* very whimsical and inconstant, for none of the pursuits I have ever followed have afforded me half the pleasure I expected."

"Because," replied Dunallan, with much gentleness, "you have been given a mind, my dear Miss Dunallan, which cannot be satisfied with the pursuits you have hitherto followed. What you have with so much ardour, made your first and favourite objects of pursuit, (will you pardon me for saying it,) ought only to have been resorted to as recreations for a mind such as yours. You will not be surprised when I own to you,

that your character has been my particular study ever since I have been here. I have endeavoured to make myself acquainted with the nature of your pursuits. I have learnt with what unwearied eagerness you followed them; and have now heard you confess your disappointment. I have seen your glen, your Gothic building, your garden, your green-house, your music-room, your library, your paintings."

"Oh! stop this enumeration," exclaimed Catharine, "I am sufficiently ashamed of my changeable unsatisfied feelings. But there are some things, Mr. Dunallan, in which I have never changed. My father and Elizabeth are always the same to me. It is because I have had but few living objects of interest, that I have endeavoured to fix my affections on those which are incapable of satisfying the heart."

"When Elizabeth is with you, do you never feel any of this weariness and dissatisfaction?" asked Dunallan mildly.

"Not so much; and if I had several Elizabeths, I dare say I should never feel it."

"My dear Miss Dunallan," replied her cousin, "do not suppose that I presume to censure you, or any pursuit that has afforded you pleasure. I rather wished to express the admiration I felt, for the correct and beautiful taste which has led

you, in comparative retirement, to arrive at a perfection in those pursuits which I have looked for in vain amongst those who have had opportunities of forming their ideas from the first models in the world."

"Flattery! even from you, Mr. Dunallan! this I did not expect."

"I do not flatter, Miss Dunallan. I speak my real sentiments. All I have seen done by your direction, to improve the scenery around you, has, in my opinion, been charmingly done. Your Gothic reading retirement is in the most correct taste; your garden—all, indeed, appears to me in an uncommon degree perfect. Your paintings are so, from the just taste which has prevented your attempting what is beyond the power of almost any but artists to attain. Your music, from the same reason, is singularly pleasing. In short, you must not be displeased with me when I say, that I greatly admire both your natural powers, and the energy with which they have been cultivated. And allow me to add, that the more interest I feel in the possessor of these powers, the more anxious shall I be to see them directed to objects which will afford her a more pleasing reward than the weariness of which she complains, and which, though felt I believe

by all who are engaged in trifling pursuits, becomes the supreme misery of a superior mind."

There was something so earnest, yet kind and gentle in Dunallan's voice and manner, that Catharine felt softened. "I long most earnestly," replied she, "to have such pursuits in my power."

"And may I ask," returned Dunallan, "were you completely your own mistress, what would be the first object of your wishes?"

"Oh!" said Catharine, "friends—friends whom I could love. I would search for them wherever I went; and I should go every where, and see every thing that is worth seeing."

"And where would you first go, in this search?"

"To London perhaps?"

"To London in search of friends!" interrupted Dunallan smiling.

"I should expect to meet the most polished and agreeable society of my country there," replied Catharine, "and amongst them I surely might find some to love, and many to admire; a sentiment I have scarcely ever experienced, and thought so very delightful when I did."

"Delightful indeed!" replied Dunallan, "but after you had found friends, and objects of admiration?—"

“ I should in their society enjoy whatever offered : books, the theatre. We might travel in other countries, in search of those beauties and perfections not to be found in our own. Oh ! I should never be unhappy anywhere, surrounded by those I loved.”

They had now reached the summit of the hill to which Catharine proposed walking. After having slowly ascended by a path rendered almost dark by the deep woods which surrounded and overshadowed them, they at once, on turning a rocky point, came upon an opening in the road which discovered a scene of extreme grandeur and beauty. The hill on which they stood, steep, rocky, and covered with hanging woods, was washed at its base by the gently swelling waves of a far-extended inland bay, whilst all around rose woody hills and bold towering mountains, sometimes nearly meeting, and then receding, as if to disclose the beauteous lakes that lay within their sheltering grandeur, and now reflected in softened majesty the wild and varied beauties of their guardian mountains. Far beyond was seen a boundless ocean, peaceful and sublime, and here and there the faint but picturesque outline of some distant islands, half mingling with the clouds that glowed around the setting sun. All nature seemed hushed in silent pleasure. No

sound was heard but the distant plash of oars from the little fishing boats that slowly glided homewards. The song of the blackbird, soft and wild, added sweetness and sadness to the feelings inspired by the universal calm, and sublime grandeur of the scene.

“What a scene !” exclaimed Dunallan. They both for some moments gazed in silent admiration.

“I do not remember this magnificent view,” resumed he. “How could I, even as a boy, be so dead to all that is great and beautiful in nature?”

“It was not then known to be so fine,” said Catharine. “It is so only from this side of the hill; and no one had thought of clearing away the wood, which was so close and thick as wholly to intercept the view.”

“This, then, is another instance of your taste, Miss Dunallan,” said her cousin.

She smiled.

“And do you weary of this also?” asked he.

“Oh never. But this glorious scene inspires feelings almost as painful as weariness. One’s mind feels so bounded, so confined, so dark—amidst such splendid displays of nature.”

“Of nature !” repeated Dunallan. He paused and looked at Catharine. “What or who is na-

ture?" continued he. "Shall we, when we gaze on such a scene as this, say 'The heavens declare the glory of *nature*—the earth is full of *her* glory?' Why, my dear Miss Dunallan, should we substitute a mere idea in the room of the glorious Being who has created that profusion of magnificence and beauty, and who formed in the human heart a capacity to feel so deeply what is magnificent and beautiful? Why, by ascribing this glory to a vague idea, separate ourselves still farther from its real and ever-present Author, who so powerfully solicits and demands our affections, and claims even the first place in our hearts? It is because love is the natural consequence of admiration, that we feel a sort of oppression on our feelings when we most intensely admire the glories around us, without raising our hearts to their Author. We cannot love inanimate nature in the degree we admire it. We cannot love an undefined idea; and we do not make ourselves acquainted with the character of the real Author, nor regard the light he pours around us in every part of his creation."

Catharine felt awed by Dunallan's manner; but after a pause replied. "Was nature always as we now see it, we should certainly wish to discard whatever might prevent us from attempting to ascend in thought to its divine Author: but I

have seen that bay dark and gloomy, and dangerous—the trees on its banks rent by the storm—the boats tossing on the waves.—I have been detained hours in this shelter, watching their perilous landing, whilst wives, and children, and mothers, were suffering anguish from their terrors: Then—”

“Then,” mildly interrupted Dunallan,” the lesson was only different, and taught what is equally necessary to be known,—that the Being who generally speaks to us in the language of love and mercy can also frown.” The sound of approaching voices now interrupted this conversation.

“I hear your friends advancing,” said Dunallan, apparently rather disappointed by the interruption; “before we part may I ask, whether the life you described to me at the beginning of our walk was the life you would deem most happy?”

“If I recollect aright what I said, it was,” replied Catharine.

“It was merely a life of pleasure and amusement,” said Dunallan.

“And would not that be happiness?”

“No: and if you expect it to be so, be assured, dear Miss Dunallan, you will be disappointed.”

“What life then would be happy?”

“A life of usefulness alone.”

The party now approached, and seemed surprised at finding Catharine and Dunallan.

“I thought you were with Lord Dunallan, my dear Catharine,” said Rose, “Mr. St. Clair assured me that you were.”

“And so I was, for a short time, dear Rose,” replied Catharine.

St. Clair seemed displeased and uncomfortable; young Cameron miserable. Catharine still leant on Dunallan's arm; and taking a last look of the bay, and its surrounding mountains, now darkening in the twilight, they turned to descend the hill. The path admitted of two only. Catharine and Dunallan walked on in silence. Her thoughts were fixed on his last words, “a life of usefulness;” she wished to know his ideas of such a life. The conversation this evening had increased her esteem for Dunallan, yet she felt even less able than before to understand him. She wished, however, that she could, and determined that, in future, she would not avoid his society. As they were entering the house, she said to him, smiling,

“Mr. Dunallan, you must tell me what you think is a useful life at some other time.”

“I shall be most happy to tell you,” replied he, “and if you would agree with me—if in this

we could be of the same opinion;" he hesitated—then stopped, and left the sentence unfinished.

St. Clair was near, and heard what passed. They then joined the party in the drawing-room. St. Clair almost immediately addressed Dunallan in his usual slighting tone of voice and manner.

"Pray, Mr. Dunallan, are you one of those people who approve of young ladies teaching poor children to read the Bible, &c. &c. instead of sending them, in the good old way, to be taught by some old woman in the village."

"I think," replied Dunallan, with unmoved calmness, "that where there is an old woman capable of teaching, it would be a pity to supersede her in her profession; but I think young ladies most properly and most amiably employed in superintending and encouraging the old woman in her labours."

"Well," resumed St. Clair, "I confess I have not been able to perceive the benefit poor children can receive from the instructions of young ladies that they might not equally receive from that of old women; and I mean, when I get a seat in Parliament, to offer my services to the old ladies, to bring in a bill to guard the profession against those pretty intruders; and that for their sakes as much as that of the old ladies; for I know nothing so likely to injure the charms of

the lovelier sex as the air and manner of a school-mistress."

All the young ladies laughed excepting Rose.

"I beg, Mr. St. Clair," said Mrs. Lennox, "that you will have the goodness to let that subject remain at rest. Teaching the poor is the fashion of the day, and my poor Rose has been infected by it; but she has an inaptitude about her at doing any thing, even a fashionable thing fashionably. Instead of subscribing, as I do, to Lady Mary D.'s school in our neighbourhood, and always going to its examinations, and presenting the children with new dresses—for they have such a neat uniform,—instead of this, my poor Rose must have a dozen little miserable things, who are too sickly to walk so far as the school, in her room, and teach them to read the Bible, during those very hours I wished her to devote to her harp."

Rose blushed, and tears started into her eyes. "You know, Mamma, I was to rise two hours earlier for my harp."

"Oh, yes, my dear, and look like a ghost from want of sleep! Ridiculous?"

"Surely," said George Lennox, "ten hours of sleep is too much, either for health, or in a moral point of view."

"Dear George," said Mrs. Lennox, "do not

encourage your sister. She will think I was quite cruel in preventing her spending the precious hours necessary to acquire those accomplishments, which are quite indispensable, in teaching a few miserable cottagers, what, if they are to live, they will learn equally well in the next village."

"Which is four miles off," said George, "and the school not large enough to admit nearly all the children who have strength to walk; consequently, half the girls around us have scarcely any means of instruction."

"I did not know you were so intimately acquainted with their affairs, George," said his mother, trying to smile.

"I am perfectly acquainted with their situation," replied George, "and long most earnestly to see it improved."

"Well, I declare," exclaimed Sir Archibald Cameron, addressing Lord Dunallan, "I think there is something very amiable in the enthusiasm for improving the state of the poor, which is so general at present amongst well-disposed young people."

"Very amiable indeed," replied his Lordship, with an air of absence.

"Certainly," said Mrs. St. Clair, "improve the lower orders as much as possible by proper

means; but not by young ladies forgetting their places in society, and doing that themselves which ought to be left to more proper persons, while they neglect . . .”

“ Their harps,” interrupted Dunallan playfully.

“ Oh, I forgot, Mr. Dunallan, that you were an advocate for ladies’ schools.”

Dunallan attempted to change the subject, which seemed disagreeable or uninteresting to most of the party; but St. Clair appeared determined to pursue it, and appealed to Catharine for her opinion.

“ I have not formed any,” replied she languidly; her thoughts had indeed wandered from a subject in which she felt little interest.

St. Clair looked disappointed at the careless indifference of her manner; she perceived this, and said smiling, “ I can tell you, however, what my opinion is, without taking time to consider what it ought to be. I believe it is proper to have the poor children taught all that may afterwards be useful to them; but I think it would be very tiresome to do it myself; and I suspect that the young ladies who do it have, in general, (perhaps almost unconsciously,) some secret view to praise, or, in short, something more agreeable

than the mere pleasure of imparting knowledge to the ignorant."

St. Clair laughed, "Ah! Miss Dunallan," exclaimed he, "your penetration leads you to the truth direct, without a tedious attempt to form a wise opinion."

"The discovery of such truths, however," said Dunallan, in a tone of voice almost severe, "does more honour to the penetration of the head than to the feelings of the heart."

Catharine reddened, and bowing to Dunallan said, "It is perhaps fortunate for me, Mr. Dunallan, that of late I have found it necessary to avoid consulting the heart; I might otherwise have felt your compliment too deeply." She then rose, and went towards her harp, to conceal the tears she could not restrain.

St. Clair glanced indignantly at Dunallan, and then followed her; an expression of pleasure, however, was also on his countenance. Dunallan became very thoughtful, and the ladies looked at each other.

"You see the consequences of your foolish schools, Rose," said Mrs. Lennox in a whisper to her daughter; "you have made your young friend quite unhappy."

Rose seemed to believe herself the cause of

what had passed; and going towards Dunallan said, in a low voice, "I believe Catharine is quite right; I did hope I should be doing something worthy of praise in teaching those poor children."

Dunallan smiled, "But that was not your motive for doing it, Miss Lennox."

"Oh, perhaps it might; at any rate, it does not signify how it was. Don't you like the harp? Let us go near."

Dunallan followed the sweet girl. St. Clair was attempting to recommend himself to Catharine by the most flattering description of a scene he had witnessed that day,—a family who, from great wretchedness, had been placed in a situation of comfort by Catharine's bounty. Dunallan listened eagerly. St. Clair used all his eloquence to reconcile her to herself. Rose joined in admiration of her friend's goodness; young Cameron also was more eloquent than usual in the eulogium he bestowed on this idol of his heart. All seemed anxious to make up to her for the cruel speech of Dunallan; but in vain; a cloud was fixed on Catharine's brow which nothing could remove during the whole of the evening. She tired of the harp, and, intreating Rose to take her place, and putting her arm within Elizabeth's, she passed Dunallan with an air of

extreme coldness, and led her friend to another part of the room, showing by her looks that she did not wish to be followed. Elizabeth, when she saw that the gentlemen were attempting to converse with the party of young ladies they had left, said in a low voice, "I feel that you have some cause to be displeased, dear Catharine, but do not, my friend, show your feelings so much; try at least to conceal them for a short time."

"I cannot," replied Catharine, "I never felt more miserable."

"You do not feel more so than he does," said Elizabeth, glancing towards Dunallan, who stood in deep thought near Rose's harp.

Catharine followed Elizabeth's look, and then sighed deeply. "His misery is no comfort to me. He must be miserable, thinking of me as he does. Oh! what wretchedness is before us both!"

During the remainder of the evening, Catharine purposely avoided meeting Dunallan's looks. When parting for the night, he held out his hand as usual; she gave him hers; he held it for a moment, and she involuntarily looked up. Dunallan's manner seemed to ask forgiveness, but Catharine turned coldly away. He pressed her hand gently in his, saying, "Good night," in a voice more than usually soft. Catharine felt she

had cause to be displeased, yet was touched by his manner. Elizabeth, on this occasion, did not defend Dunallan, for she too had thought him harsh. When they again met, Catharine's manner was distant and somewhat haughty. Elizabeth's was also colder. Dunallan seemed painfully sensible of the change. He endeavoured at different times to induce Catharine to enter into conversation with him, but she purposely avoided it; and once that he found her alone, she turned so markedly from him, that, though he still appeared anxious, by every other means, to regain her approbation, he no longer attempted to resume that intercourse which had, in some degree, subsisted between them before that unfortunate evening. He looked unhappy, however, and Catharine now felt her power. This almost unconsciously gave her pleasure, which she still more unconsciously betrayed in her manner; and it was Dunallan himself who led her to perceive this: she felt that he read her very soul, and was soon convinced, by the indifference of his manner, that if her displeasure had given him pain, her feeling satisfaction in that pain had not only done it away, but had also lowered her in his opinion.

CHAPTER IV.

ONE evening Lord Dunallan sent for his daughter. On her entering the apartment in which he waited for her, he met her, and with even more than his usual tenderness, pressed her to his heart.

“My dear Catharine, my beloved child, my long-dreaded trial is at last come; I must *at last* part with the idol of my affections.”

Catharine became as pale as death at this sudden intimation of her approaching fate. For some moments she could not speak; then struggling for composure.

“Is Mr. Dunallan still desirous to. . . .” her voice trembling, and she stopt.

Her Father hesitated, “My love, what is your opinion of Mr. Dunallan? You now know him. Tell me candidly, my Catharine, your sentiments respecting him.”

“And will my opinion, will my sentiments, have any influence over the future?” asked Catharine eagerly.

Lord Dunallan looked uneasy: "If, my love, I could make any change . . . if you could not feel—but it is impossible. Yet I should wish . . . could you only love him, Catharine, Oh! how happy should I be, happier than I can express."

"Be happy, then, my dear Father," replied Catharine, attempting to smile; but the tears gushed into her eyes, and she turned away to conceal them.

Her father remained silent for some moments, then sighing deeply said, "Mr. Dunallan, I think, my Catharine, ought to please. He is mild, and sensible, and polite in his manners; he is handsome; his conversation does not seem uninteresting to you; he is singularly well informed. In short, what do you find disagreeable in Mr. Dunallan?"

"I do not find any thing *disagreeable*," said Catharine; "but . . ."

"Do you not, my love?" interrupted Lord Dunallan joyfully. "How you delight me! Well, I will ask no more."

Catharine smiled languidly; she felt hurt, and made no reply.

Her Father understood the expression of her countenance, and paused a moment, then proceeded. "I have just had a conversation with Mr. Dunallan. He tells me he has received

letters which oblige him to be in London in a month; he will be detained there some time, and may perhaps go abroad. In short, my love, he wishes to hasten your union, that you may, I suppose, spend a short time at Arnmore before you leave Scotland; for there also he has business of importance, which has met with much delay from his residence here for so many weeks."

Catharine reddened. "And his convenience makes it necessary, I suppose, to hurry over the business which brought him here; and you, my Lord, expect me to agree to"

"My love, you do Mr. Dunallan great injustice; he has in no instance forgot the respect and delicacy due to you: his first wish seems to be your happiness."

"My happiness!" repeated Catharine, "ah, let him leave me with you, then, my dear Father—at least till he has arranged all these affairs."

"He proposed this, my Child, but I declined it"

"Declined it!" exclaimed Catharine, "impossible! Oh, my dear Father, could you so far forget all that is due to your daughter! to my sex!"

She rose and stood, with breathless and terrified expectation, awaiting his answer.

He in a soothing manner took both her hands: "Be calm, my Catharine, your Father has forgot nothing which your delicacy ought to require; nothing which he can suppose essential to your future happiness. Mr. Dunallan, I am certain, loves you Catharine."

She turned away.

"You do not think he does, my love; but from his whole manner, and the anxious solicitude he showed respecting your wishes, feelings, and future happiness, I feel convinced you would now be the choice of his heart, were he freed from all engagements."

"And as a proof of this," said Catharine with bitterness, "he asks delay. Oh, my dear Father, pity me! do not urge this! do not thus mortify. . . ."

"My love, you must allow me to trust my own judgment in this matter. You entirely mistake Mr. Dunallan. He only proposes delay with a view to what might be your wish. Recollect yourself, my child, and let me hope, my ever kind, ever considerate Catharine, that you will still be willing to fulfil past and indissoluble engagements."

"And when? my Lord," replied Catharine with assumed firmness.

“ My Catharine, I have promised to Mr. Dunallan, to gain your consent to be his, on Tuesday next.”

“ On Tuesday next ! within a week !” she became quite pale, but added, in a voice of forced calmness, “ My Lord, I shall be ready.”

He held out his hand, she gave him her's, but turned away her face. “ Dearest Catharine, you will be happy.” She made no reply, but hastening from him, shut herself into her own apartment, and gave vent to her miserable and mortified feelings. She was unable to appear at dinner, her head ached so violently. Elizabeth, in vain, tried to offer some consolation. Her wounded pride and affection had prevented her gaining any particulars from her father of the manner in which he had declined Dunallan's proposed delay : yet the idea that he had hastened their union against Dunallan's wishes, rendered her wretched. She could not regain sufficient composure to appear that evening. Her Father, however, visited her in her room ; and his affectionate kindness, and the anxiety and deep concern expressed in his countenance, revived in her heart a willingness to sacrifice her own feelings to his favourite wishes.

She next morning appeared at breakfast, but

looked so ill that every one annoyed her by their condolence, and inquiries respecting her health. To Dunallan she never raised her eyes. If she had, she would have seen that he looked as miserable as herself. Elizabeth told her so afterwards.

“My dear Elizabeth,” replied she, “do not speak to me of him, or of any thing that is not a thousand miles from the subject, or I shall never be able to support myself till next Tuesday. I will, if possible, make my Father happy. After that, happen what will, I shall be at a distance from him. He will not know what I suffer.”

Elizabeth tenderly watched over her unhappy friend, attempting to sooth her agitated feelings, and to convince her that the power to meet approaching trials, is not to be gained by turning the mind from them; but, on the contrary, by viewing them, as far as may be, in their true colours, divested of all imaginary aggravations, and thus preparing for the patient endurance of what is unavoidable.

“Do not follow me, my Elizabeth,” said Catharine, the evening after her conversation with her Father, “I am going to the Glen; I shall not there be interrupted; and I wish to accustom myself to view the future without your kind looks

and dear voice always ready to win me from painful thought."

Elizabeth believed her right, and suffered her to go alone.

After Catharine had walked some time in deep thought, she was suddenly startled by the sound of approaching footsteps. It is Dunallan! thought she; even this retreat is no longer safe from his privileged intrusion. She would have turned away, but felt ashamed of her weakness; and raising her head from its drooping and thoughtful posture, determined not to be intruded on even by Dunallan. It was young Cameron; and Catharine felt so relieved when she saw it was not her dreaded cousin, that an expression of pleasure, which Cameron had seldom the happiness to inspire, was visible on her countenance.

"Pardon this intrusion, Miss Dunallan," said he; "I thought you were engaged, or I should not have presumed. . . ."

"Oh! I beg, Mr. Cameron, you will walk wherever you feel inclined," interrupted Catharine. "There are many paths here for solitary people; but I must at present leave you." She was passing on, when the beseeching expression of his looks stopt her. "Do you wish to read in my retreat, Mr. Cameron? You will find some new books, and I am not going there."

“No, Miss Dunallan, I wish a moment’s conversation with you.”

“Certainly,” said Catharine, turning to walk with him.

He seemed at a loss, and unable to speak. Catharine looked at him, and his confusion leading her to suspect the truth, she felt sorry that she had consented to listen to him, yet wished as soon as possible to put an end to his suspense. She walked on in silence. At length, after many attempts, he regained sufficient composure to say, in a hurried voice, “Miss Dunallan, it is impossible for any one so deeply interested in your happiness as I am, not to feel miserable in seeing the present state of your feelings, or to help almost execrating the unnatural. . . .”

“Mr. Cameron,” interrupted Catharine, “I cannot stay to hear any thing of this nature.”

She was turning away, when he respectfully, yet almost wildly, seized her hand.

“Forgive me; I know not what I say. Oh, Catharine, if you knew what I have suffered—what I do suffer—but I know you cannot feel for me. . . .”

“I do feel for you, Mr. Cameron,” interrupted Catharine; “and, as a proof of it, I entreat you never to think of me more, but as a friend who grieves to think she has ever pained you.

It is impossible you can regain the happiness I wish you, thinking otherwise. Next Tuesday I am to be the wife of Mr. Dunallan."

"I know it Catharine; but without loving him. You! the idol of so many hearts—you whom I would die to preserve from the least uneasiness, are to Oh! I cannot endure the thought. Hear me, Catharine, I have formed a plan to avoid this cruel sacrifice—my mother has consented;—I ask no reward,—I hope for nothing."

"Mr. Cameron," interrupted Catharine, "you must say no more. I thank you for the interest you feel in my fate; but you quite mistake my character, if you think I could thus consent to withdraw from an engagement formed by my Father. Farewell, and for your sake, let me say, for a long time."

Catharine spoke with a firm calmness, that left Cameron no hope of inducing her to change her sentiments. He pressed her hand to his heart; "Farewell, then, Catharine, for ever; my first, my only love, my last." He rushed from her. She looked after him, till the trees concealed him from her sight, then burst into tears. "What a world is this!" thought she; "how unhappy the human race. In this remote corner, a few

are met together ; and even here, where all promises peace, the half of them are miserable !”

She walked slowly towards the house, fearing again to meet young Cameron.

The party were assembled in a room which opened on the lawn. She heard voices, and approached. As she drew near, she distinguished Dunallan’s voice, and Elizabeth’s. They seemed gay and cheerful. “Is it possible !” thought she, “Elizabeth told me he looked miserable,—and she too, so gay ! How foolish to suppose myself of so much consequence to others. I will not cloud their gaiety by my melancholy presence ; yet I could not have thus laughed had Elizabeth been so wretched.” Dunallan’s voice continued as if reading, and pausing at intervals, whilst the others laughed and talked. Catharine turned away to go to her own apartment. As she passed, she perceived St. Clair seated in a window, in a melancholy and thoughtful attitude, and apparently unoccupied with what was passing. He started on seeing her, and rose : she bowed and passed on.

In a few minutes Elizabeth joined her. “You promised to come to us, my dear Catharine, when you returned.”

“I mean to keep my promise,” replied Catharine, “but I am tired : leave me to rest a little

here. Do not let me, Elizabeth, interrupt your amusements."

"Amusements! Catharine, what do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing.—But come now, I am ready to go with you."

She hastened away from Elizabeth, and joined the party below, who had now become perfectly quiet. St. Clair still sat at the window. He rose on her entrance. She seated herself near the window. "You are admiring the evening, Mr. St. Clair: it is indeed beautiful."

St. Clair sat down by her. "Beautiful, indeed," replied he, "but very sad. Those gray clouds, tinged with the last rays of the sun, becoming fainter every moment, always remind me of something melancholy."

"I feel the same," said Catharine; "the setting sun always reminds me of death! that last setting! that departure to other climes!"

"Let us go into the next room, or have lights here," said Lord Dunallan.

"Oh, my dear Father, allow us to enjoy this peaceful twilight," said Catharine in an entreating tone of voice.

"Surely, my love, if you wish it." He approached and stood near her; "but we must leave such gloomy subjects, Mr. St. Clair. Where

is that strange poem you were reading, Mr. Dunallan? Perhaps there still may be sufficient light to read it to Catharine."

Dunallan found the poem; and, bringing it to the window, began to read. All laughed a second time. Catharine could hardly smile: she was not in a humour to laugh at any thing, and wondered that any one could. St. Clair smiled contemptuously, and she better understood his feelings. Dunallan had not spoken since she entered the room; and she never looked at him until he was reading this poem; indeed she had avoided looking at him for many days, and was now struck with the languor and paleness of his countenance, as well as with the little real cheerfulness he seemed to feel while he laughed with the others. When he stopped reading he turned his eyes towards Catharine. Hers were fixed on him, and she withdrew them without that expression of displeasure, which ever since her conversation with her Father had filled them when she was in any way called upon to notice Dunallan. He ventured to approach her, and said, in a voice of extreme gentleness, "you seem fatigued, Miss Dunallan; I fear you have walked too far."

"Yes," answered Catharine, "I believe I have;" she almost unconsciously added, looking

at Dunallan with an expression of concern, "are *you* quite well, Mr. Dunallan?"

"Perfectly so," replied he, a slight flush tinging his forehead. He looked down for a moment, but his eyes still retained an expression of pleasure when he again raised them.

The conversation now became more general. When the sun was set, and it was become too dark to see the expression of any one's countenance, young Cameron glided into the room, and seated himself at a distance from Catharine. He sometimes joined in the conversation, and no one would have suspected him of being more unhappy than usual.

When Catharine retired to her room for the night, she found a letter on her table. She opened it, exclaiming, "a letter from St. Clair!" Elizabeth was with her. "What can he have to say to you, Catharine?"

"A strange proposal," said Catharine after reading it. "How little does he know me." She threw his letter indignantly from her.

Elizabeth took it up. "May I read it, Catharine?"

"I believe I ought not to betray his secret; but you, Elizabeth, may know it. He is so vain, so conceited, I can never wish him to stand high in your opinion."

Elizabeth read the letter. "Poor St. Clair," said she, "he flatters himself he is not indifferent to you."

"If he had not been so before," replied Catharine, "this would have made him so. An elopement! Had he known my character as he pretends in this letter to do, he would have been convinced that I would sooner endure any misery than escape from it by such means. I would sooner die than degrade myself even for those I could love."

"Proud Catharine," said Elizabeth, smiling, "you know not what love is."

"I certainly do not know, Elizabeth, nor can I even conceive what that sort of love is which could induce me to take such a degrading step as this. I cannot imagine myself so deluded as to suppose I could be happy after I had rendered myself the object of my own contempt. But give me this letter. It does not pain me to disappoint this vain St. Clair. I wish he was gone, and his mother also, whose haughty spirit begins, I see, to revolt at the little effect her flattery and caresses have on me. I loathe all this, Elizabeth. I almost think Arnmore and Mr. Dunallan's contemptuous treatment, will be less intolerable than those incessant women, Mrs. Lennox and Mrs.

St. Clair, with their gross flattery, and teasing disgusting attentions."

"Dear Catharine, you are very severe."

"No, Elizabeth; I am not unjustly so. Don't I see through all this? Is not Rose as amiable—far more amiable than I am? Are not you, Elizabeth, more ——"

"No, no, no, dear Catharine; but good night; you will leave yourself no time for sleep, and that pale face sadly calls for it."

"Do not mind my face, Elizabeth; it must be paler yet. You must see my reply to this letter; I feel so indignant, I fear I shall be unbecomingly so in what I write."

Next morning, neither St. Clair nor young Cameron appeared at breakfast. Lady Cameron said her son had been unexpectedly called away, and that she and her family must also deny themselves the pleasure of a further stay at Dunallan Castle, as business made it necessary that Sir Archibald should return home. Lord Dunallan seemed disappointed, and entreated them to prolong their stay to the following week. Catharine was silent. Lady Cameron, however, was gently determined in her resolution, though she looked concerned, and her daughters very grave. Lord Dunallan perceived that something had happen-

ed, and guessed from Catharine's looks that she was the cause of this sudden determination. Mrs. St. Clair's colour this morning was higher than usual, but she attempted to conceal her disappointed pride and hopes under an air of contempt. "I too must unfortunately relinquish the pleasure of being present during the next *happy* week, my Lord," said she, after Lady Cameron had announced her intended departure, "but it is easy to part from friends when we leave them so secure of felicity." Catharine felt this speech as it was intended, but remained silent. Both families left Dunallan Castle during the forenoon; but Lord Dunallan was relieved from his dread of a very small party by the arrival of young Clanmar and his amiable wife.

"I must really endeavour, my dear Elizabeth," said Catharine to her friend, "to conceal, for these few remaining days, the misery I endure. I feel mortified and degraded by what has already passed, in consequence of my giving way to my wretched feelings. I must not—shall not be an object of compassion to every one, and of distress to my father. Do not look so much and so anxiously at me when I am in company, Elizabeth, and try to speak cheerfully to me. Oh that conversation between my father and Dunallan! could I only forget that. But to be forced

upon him ; he to ask delay !” She clasped her hands in anguish of mind.

“ I have entreated your father, dearest Catharine, to tell me what passed on that occasion, and I do not think you have any reason to suppose Mr. Dunallan wished for delay on any account, but your apparent indifference to him.”

“ Did my father tell you what passed ? Do not, for heaven’s sake, conceal it from me, Elizabeth : truth cannot be worse than my fears.”

“ Lord Dunallan told me that the only idea which seemed to distress Dunallan was your marked indifference, he even thought dislike to him, which led him to fear your being led by motives of obedience to your father, to take vows which your heart could not ratify. In short, my dear Catharine, some religious scruples which he felt for *you* only : and this convinced me that the state of his own feelings enables him to take them without scruple : for with his strict notions he would not have considered himself innocent in so doing had he felt otherwise.”

“ And would he have been innocent, Elizabeth ? or shall I be innocent ?”

“ Ah ! Catharine, you must not now think of this. It is too late : besides, you fulfil a first duty in obeying your father.”

Catharine was not convinced, but felt that it was, as Elizabeth said, too late to plead such an excuse. Yet, like her friend, she could not help concluding that Dunallan would not be willing, probably, to take these solemn vows were he averse to fulfilling them. Yet he had asked delay. She determined, if possible, to avoid thinking, and to attempt to appear less unhappy, let Dunallan suppose what he would. She wished to leave her father, under the impression that she was reconciled to his wishes. For the few following days her countenance wore an expression of submission, and calm elevation of mind, inspired by the consciousness of sacrificing her own feelings to those of her father; while the paleness of her looks, and her touching gentleness to all around her, gave her the appearance of one who had lost all hope for herself, and only sought to bestow on others what was for her gone for ever. When addressing her father, she even attempted to be cheerful. To Dunallan she was respectful and attentive, as if she already had taken the vow of subjection. Yet she deceived no one. When she met Dunallan's eyes, which she carefully avoided, but which seemed for ever fixed on her, she saw in them an expression of pity and concern she could not mistake. Her

father, too, in vain tried to affect a gaiety, which only served to render his next moments of absence, and evidently painful thought, more striking.

CHAPTER V.

At last the dreaded morning arrived. Elizabeth went to her friend at an early hour: she found her dressed, and seated at a table, which was covered with letters and papers.

“What is all this, my Catharine? Remember, my dear friend, the fatigues of this day.”

“I do remember, my Elizabeth. I am only performing a necessary duty. It ought not to have been so long neglected; but never till last night did it so forcibly strike me that I might not again see Dunallan Castle: I had quite forgot to settle some things. But I have done,” added she, putting up her papers with a composure that astonished Elizabeth; then turning to her friend, a faint smile on her languid countenance,

“How do you like my bridal attire, Elizabeth?”

Elizabeth looked at her for a moment, then turned away to conceal her tears.

“Dear Catharine, do not look so patient, so resigned, yet so unhappy. You will leave us all quite miserable.”

“ I look as I feel, Elizabeth. I am resigned. I have now arranged all I wish to be done, should I never again return here, and I care not what happens. I am prepared for every thing, but (her voice changed) parting from you : (then feeling herself overcome,) I must not think of this—we shall soon again meet. I shall write,—No, dear Elizabeth, do not embrace me ; do nothing to soften me. I have almost wished these few days for Mrs. St. Clair, instead of that gentle Mrs. Clanmar, who looks so sweetly anxious to comfort me, and to gain my confidence ; and my dear kind Rose, and even you, Elizabeth. I entreat you do not all gaze on me with looks of such touching interest. Even Mr. Dunallan ; but I must not think of him : had he felt pity for me sooner ; but it is now too late. Oh that the next hour were over ! When will it be time for breakfast ? You know we were to set off very early. When I am gone, Elizabeth, will you assure my father ——” Her voice failed, and she turned away and walked to an open window. The morning was calm and beautiful, and the freshness of the air revived her. She sat down, but rose again almost immediately, a blush crimsoning her before pale cheek.

“ Mr. Dunallan,” said she, retiring hastily from the window, “ returning as usual from his

morning walk, I suppose, quite composed; and he has seen that I am ready," added she, bitterly, and looking at her dress. "He bowed, too, to show he did, perhaps. Well, a short time will undeceive him now. I shall soon have no secrets from him; no attempts to conceal my real feelings: he shall know that I have a heart that can be given only by myself; and calm, and proud, and immoveably right as he always is, he shall not despise me."

"Despise you, Catharine! he does not; he never did. I am satisfied he, I could almost say, loves you."

A gentle tap at the door of the apartment interrupted Elizabeth. Catharine became quite pale. It was Lord Dunallan.

"My Catharine, my dear love, we wait for you."

Catharine attempted to regain her composure, but without success. She leant on her father, but stopped on the stairs to breathe; her heart beat so violently that she became quite faint.

"My dear uncle," said Elizabeth, "let Catharine and me remain together till after breakfast. It is too much for her to see all our assembled friends before this trying ceremony." Lord Dunallan agreed to this proposal; and Catharine returned to her room with Elizabeth, who en-

deavoured to induce her to take some refreshment. She tried, but in vain. She was sick at heart.

“ I cannot go through this ceremony, Elizabeth.”

“ Dear Catharine, recollect yourself. It is not possible now to retract.”

“ Leave me, dear Elizabeth. I regain composure most easily when alone. Take this last kiss, my Elizabeth ; after I am again calm, do not bestow one kind word or look upon me, or I shall be unable for this dreadful exhibition—these fearful untrue vows !”

Elizabeth would not consent to leave her friend. She saw that the kind of composure she acquired when left alone, was only the result of an attempt to feel indifferent to every thing, and that the first trifle which awakened her feelings destroyed her composure. Elizabeth partly succeeded in calming her agitation, by representing things as they really were.

“ I am ready, my dear Elizabeth,” said Catharine at last, “ my true, my best friend !”

Lord Dunallan entered, and Catharine became as pale as ever. She took his arm, however, and hastened forward, as if afraid of again being obliged to return.

Lord Dunallan opened the door of the apartment in which the party were assembled. Catharine shrunk back for a moment, then suffered her father to lead her forward. In an instant Dunallan was at her side, and the voice of the old and venerable clergyman of Dunallan church was raised to heaven in prayer. Catharine, pale as marble, and almost as still, leant on her father, and seemed to listen, but did not hear. Dunallan audibly assented to the few simple but solemn vows he was required to make. Catharine's assent was supposed. Elizabeth drew her white glove from a hand almost as white and lifeless. Dunallan took it in his, and she was restored to some degree of consciousness by feeling that his trembled. He held her hand firmly, however, till the short ceremony was over, then touching it with his lips, resigned it to her father.

Lord Dunallan would have pressed Catharine to his heart, but she hurried from him, and from every one. Elizabeth followed her, but she waved her hand for her to leave her. Her father appeared: "Your journey is long, my love; my Catharine, I must hurry you from me. Mr. Dunallan is anxious——"

Catharine started up:—"I am ready."

"God for ever bless my dearest child."

“ Oh my dearest father ?”

He pressed her for an instant to his heart, then led her away. Dunallan was waiting. The hall was full of servants, anxious to have a last look of their beloved young mistress.

Catharine shrunk back.

“ I shall say adieu for you,” exclaimed Elizabeth ; “ Adieu, adieu, every one,” cried she, with forced gaiety, while Lord Dunallan supported Catharine into the carriage.

Dunallan followed ; and Catharine’s heart sunk within her when its door was closed on her and this most dreaded, but now nearest of all human relations. She threw herself back, and almost fainted.

Dunallan would have stopped the carriage, but Catharine motioned with her hand to prevent him. She dreaded her father seeing her agitation.

Dunallan watched her changing countenance with the deepest concern. Catharine felt annoyed, conscious that his looks were bent on her, though she did not raise her eyes, and struggled to regain composure. She attempted to let down the glass next to her : Dunallan leant past to assist, but his hand trembled almost as much as her own, and she was struck with surprise at the expression of distress and agitation which his countenance now betrayed : she even thought his

eyes glistened as he turned his face from her. The calm grave expression with which her imagination always pictured him was now wholly gone. She forgot her own feelings in thinking of his; and continuing in deep and painful thought for a few moments, the tumult within in part subsided. How selfish have I been, thought she, I forgot that he could feel, and that he has equal, perhaps greater cause of distress than myself.

“The air, I hope, revives you,” asked Dunallan, in a mild and soothing tone of voice.

She attempted to reply, but burst into tears; and, long repressed, they now flowed beyond all power of restraint. She covered her face, and turning away from Dunallan, wept and sobbed aloud. Dunallan did not speak, but she heard him sigh frequently and deeply. He at last, in the gentlest tone of voice, entreated her to be composed.

“Endeavour, Catharine, to forget the last few hours: only remember that you have now another friend, who has vowed in the sight of heaven to watch over your happiness. You shall yourself determine in what that happiness shall consist. I have seen too plainly your repugnance to the interested connection which your generous sense of duty has induced you to form. I have tried every means in my power, Catharine, to set

you free, but all have failed; and I have been most reluctantly forced to tear you from your home, and deprive you of the power of choosing your nearest friend and protector. All that I can at this moment hope is, that it may be in my power to render you at least not unhappy."

Catharine became gradually calm as Dunallan spoke. His voice and manner were so soothingly earnest and kind, that she felt touched.

"Let us, Catharine," continued he, "now attempt to look at things as they really are. There is no peace or calm to the mind but in truth."

"Truth!" repeated Catharine, in a tone of voice, and with an expression of the most mournful despondency.

"Yes, dear Catharine, truth even at this moment; and first, can you not feel me worthy of forgiveness in persevering in the fulfilment of the same promise to a dead father, that with every feeling of dislike and repugnance on your part, you have yet considered it a sacred duty to fulfil to a living one?" Catharine was struck; this simple question of Dunallan's seemed indeed to bring a volume of truth into her mind; but her thoughts were confused, and she remained silent. Dunallan, however, seemed to wait for her reply.

“ Mr. Dunallan,” said she at last, sick at heart while she spoke, “ I cannot feel that truth brings to me either calmness or peace. I would rather attempt to forget every thing, but that I have, to please my father, entered a situation in which it becomes my duty to try to be satisfied with your conduct on all occasions. I wish to fulfil this duty ; if I fail, you will perhaps feel indulgence for me when you recollect——”

Catharine’s voice failed, and she could say no more.

Dunallan turned away, and Catharine looked up, half conscious that she had answered his true and simple appeal with an ungenerous evasion. She was surprised and overcome on seeing that the cold, dreaded Dunallan was moved even to tears.

“ Catharine !” exclaimed he, after making several efforts to speak with composure, “ How shall I—how can I convince you that I am not the unfeeling, selfish, interested, cruel being I see you suppose me? You have scarcely ever permitted me to speak to you. Of late you have not even deigned to look at me. You have defeated every attempt on my part to explain myself—to attempt to assist you to be free. You have taken no notice of my letters ; your father has been equally—shall I say, *unjust*, to me ?”

“ Letters ! Mr. Dunallan,” interrupted Catharine, “ I received no letters from you.”

Dunallan looked surprised. “ I thrice wrote to you, Catharine, when you denied me every means of imparting to you what I thought might perhaps have put it in your power to avoid a connection which I saw was so hateful to you.”

“ I never received any letter from you, Mr. Dunallan,” repeated Catharine solemnly.

“ Extraordinary !” exclaimed Dunallan, “ I sent for your own woman, Catharine ; her name, I think, is Martin, and myself gave all my letters into her hand.”

Catharine now, on her part, looked much surprised. “ You gave your letters to Martin ! Mr. Dunallan.”

“ I did ; all of them.”

Catharine became very thoughtful. Could any one—could St. Clair have intercepted Dunallan’s letters ? Impossible ! She could not for a moment suspect Martin, to whom they had been intrusted, of the smallest unfaithfulness. “ Most extraordinary !” said she thoughtfully.

“ Is Martin among your present attendants, Catharine ?” asked Dunallan.

“ She is.”

“ May I then ask an explanation from her ?”

“ Certainly.”

Dunallan stopped the carriage, and desired a servant to request Martin, who was in another just behind, to come for a moment to the window. She soon appeared, and the other servants retired. Martin looked alarmed. She stood at the side of the carriage at which Catharine sat.

“Do not be alarmed, said Dunallan gently, and leaning past Catharine a little to speak to her: “Do you recollect, Martin, my giving you three letters at different times to deliver to your lady?”

“I do, Sir, perfectly. It was only last night you gave me one, and two before that, about, I think ——”

“And what became of those letters, Martin?” asked Catharine, interrupting her, and now leaning forward with looks of surprise and displeasure.

Martin appeared astonished at the question.

“Speak the truth, Martin,” said Catharine, her eyes filling with tears as she added, “Can *you*, Martin, be unfaithful to me?”

“My dear, dear young lady, no; not for all the world could offer,” exclaimed Martin, tears gushing into her eyes as she spoke; “I thought I was only giving the letters to Lord Dunallan,

as he commanded me, that he might himself deliver them to you."

Catharine sunk back: "You gave the letters to my father," said she faintly.

"Yes, Madam: just the very day on which Mr. Dunallan trusted me with his first letter, my Lord had commanded me to bring any letter for my young lady to him, and he would himself take charge of it."

Dunallan looked for a moment at Catharine; her eyes were raised timidly to him.

"That is enough," said he, in the gentlest tone of voice, to poor Martin, who stood in apparent consternation. "You have done nothing wrong, Martin: we may now proceed." He waited till she had retired, then ordered the servants to drive on; and, turning to Catharine—

"I now feel how much cause you have to regard me as you do, Catharine. You have considered me as calmly persevering in completing your wretchedness, without an effort to make escape possible. I am not surprised that you could not bring yourself to say I deserved forgiveness."

"Forgiveness! Mr. Dunallan," repeated Catharine, "I now see too plainly who it is that has most—that has all to forgive. I can scarcely,

however, hope that you can pardon this last——,” she hesitated: “Yet if you could suspend forming your judgment on this, to me, unaccountable proceeding of my father’s, I feel certain he will be able to convince you that his motives were perfectly honourable.” Catharine again burst into tears, overpowered and mortified beyond expression.

“I am convinced, my dearest Catharine, that, according to Lord Dunallan’s views, they were perfectly so,” replied Dunallan. “I have had many conversations with him. I hoped to have induced him at least to have given me time to attempt to overcome the prejudices with which you met me: but he seemed to feel that his engagement to my father made every moment of delay which he could prevent a breach of honour on his part. And you know, Catharine, that, independent of all this, a father is fully entitled to be acquainted with the contents of any letter addressed to his child while she remains under his protection. I shall now only say, that my object in writing these letters was, to make you aware that my promise to my father was entirely conditional, and was to be considered cancelled if you were averse to its completion. I hoped that the knowledge of this might have put it in your power to be free.”

Catharine shook her head.

“Your father assured me that you did not desire to be free; but your every look contradicted the assertion.”

“My promise was never conditional,” said Catharine; “that could have made no change on my part.”

“It might, however, on the part I should have taken, Catharine. But that is past.”

Catharine at once saw his meaning. “Yes; that is past!” repeated she emphatically. “Now I see too plainly how unjustly, how childishly, how madly I have acted! Mr. Dunallan, I will now say I have perceived your opinion of me. I have resented it; but you have not been unjust; I have deserved it. I can scarcely hope ever to obtain your forgiveness, but ——”

“Dearest Catharine, do not talk thus,” interrupted Dunallan; “let us exchange forgiveness for the past. Neither have been quite free from blame with regard to the other; but far, far the greatest share belongs to me. When I last renewed my promise to my father, I ought to have been more firm to my own sense of right—to my own principles.”

“In our promises, Mr. Dunallan,” said Catharine mournfully, “I must feel that we have been more ‘sinned against than sinning;’ but I wish not to remember this.”

“ No dearest Catharine, it is not our part to remember it. Let us only remember our own share in what is past; and where we have erred, let us begin to attempt averting those painful consequences which are always attendant on error.”

“ If that were possible,” said Catharine still mournfully.

“ It may be possible, dearest Catharine. Allow me to attempt to prove this to you.” Dunallan now spoke in a cheerful tone of voice. “ We have brought the past in some measure into the light of reality and truth; may I venture to go for a moment into the future. You know that in a few weeks I must leave Arnmore. I fear that during those few weeks, your father will not be satisfied unless you remain there also; but you shall, my dearest Catharine, be as free at Arnmore as you were at Dunallan Castle. Your cousin Elizabeth has promised to come to you. I earnestly wished she could have accompanied us now; but to this Lord Dunallan objected. My aunt leaves Arnmore immediately, unless you should wish her to be your guest until your cousin joins you. Miss Lennox, or any friend of yours, will, I am sure, find pleasure in making the solitude of Arnmore less tedious to you. In short, my dear Catharine, my part in attempting to do away the painful consequences of my er-

rors regarding you, shall first be to anticipate your every wish as far as it is in my power. Only let me know your wishes. I now consider your happiness as my first earthly care. As to myself, Catharine,"—Dunallan became embarrassed; but recovering himself, "I do not know in what character to ask you to consider me. To that which the ceremony of the last hour seemed to entitle me I shall never lay claim, while you feel for me as you do at present. Nothing on earth, Catharine," added he earnestly, "could induce me to remind you of that claim, while you so evidently detest it. You have just said, that you have perceived what opinion I have formed of you, and have resented it. Your adding this, proves to me that you have been mistaken. I shall say no more now. I know how little any profession of regard from one, for whom you feel as you do for me, can be agreeable to you. Yet, may I ask you to attempt to forget many things which I know you have heard against me; to judge of me for yourself, as of one whose character, from circumstances now unavoidable, you would wish to be such as you could esteem."

"I should certainly wish most earnestly to do so, Mr. Dunallan," replied Catharine.

"Let it be so then, Catharine. Attempt to consider me as one, who is really still almost a stranger to you, but who most earnestly desires

to obtain a place in your esteem. Is this settled, Catharine?"

"Yes," replied Catharine; "if you too, Mr. Dunallan, would attempt the same with regard to me"—she spoke with embarrassment, and blushed as she spoke; but the tone of her voice had resumed something of its usual animation; and Dunallan's joyful assent to her wish, as far as it was possible, settled the arrangement for the few following weeks. "If at the end of those weeks of my probation," said Dunallan, "you can feel for me differently;—but I shall say no more now."

From that moment Dunallan's manner became frank and unembarrassed, and he began to converse on subjects just sufficiently connected with their present situation to render them deeply interesting. He at last spoke of Arnmore, and mentioned his aunt. Catharine made some inquiries respecting this new relation, and was soon in tears while listening to a few particulars of her melancholy story, and to Dunallan's description of her resignation, her restored cheerfulness, her active life.

"She shall herself tell you the source of her cheerfulness and strength of mind, Catharine," said Dunallan; and then passing to other subjects, his unrestrained, but gentle and respectful manner, gradually led Catharine to converse and

feel at ease with him, and almost to forget that he was the same dreaded Dunallan, whose presence had so long been a restraint to her, and the idea of whom her constant misery. She soon conversed freely with him, looked with interest for his answer, or for the impression made on him by the sentiments and opinions she was led to express, and which his countenance instantly betrayed. He still differed frequently from her, both in feeling and in opinion; but a mild indulgence, and an anxious desire to explain his reasons for differing, joined to great apparent pleasure when he had won her to his way of thinking, made even difference of opinion agreeable.

“You are leading me on to tell you my inmost thoughts, that you may condemn them,” said she to him, after having expressed an opinion from which she saw he differed.

“Not to condemn, dearest Catharine. I only wish our opinions were the same on every subject.”

“I wish so too,” replied she smiling, “I know who would be the gainer. However, I can bear to differ from you now: at Dunallan Castle I could not.”

“Because at Dunallan Castle, when you differed from me, all your friends did so also, particularly Mr. St. Clair, who always made your ar-

gument his own. Had he really dissented because his opinions were different, I ought either to have tried to convince him, or to be convinced by him; but as he merely wished to make a merit with you by differing from me, and would have done the same had you argued on the opposite side, I thought it best to be silent, though I saw the unfavourable impression my silence made on you; but I dreaded losing my temper also, and then a quarrel must have been the consequence; and you, Catharine, do not perhaps know how important it is for a man, professing the principles I do, to guard against being brought by his own loss of temper, into a situation from which those principles forbid his extricating himself in the usual way. I sometimes too felt for Mr. St. Clair. You know, Catharine, he deserved pity; yet I think he ought to have pitied me also; for surely seeing, as he must have done, how repugnant to your feelings my presence was, he would not have changed situations with me."

"Thank heaven," said Catharine emphatically, "that Mr. St. Clair was not in your situation!"

Dunallan's smile of pleasure brought a blush to Catharine's cheek; but he turned away, and soon again spoke as if he had not perceived it.

The travellers stopt during the hottest part of the day at the beautiful village of B——. Catharine had remarked Dunallan's uncommon powers of conversation even at Dunallan Castle, where he had been checked and restrained by the cold looks and manners of most of the party. This day she had felt those powers in their full force. She scarcely observed how time passed. An hour after she had been with him, she had forgot the peculiarity of their situation, which seldom again returned to her recollection, excepting when a change of horses, or other incidents, interrupted conversation, and drew her attention from the last interesting sentence he had uttered. When, however, she learnt, on leaving the village of B——, that they were within a few miles of Arnmore, her thoughts became too powerfully oppressive for even Dunallan's conversation to suspend or overcome. It was evening—a calm gray evening after a day of bright sunshine. A soft mist rose from the fields, and enveloped the lower parts of the woods, and slowly ascended the hills.

Catharine had answered Dunallan several times without scarcely having heard what he said. She thought of her approaching interview with his aunt; of being received as the wife of Dunallan; of him also, though she heard not what he said; of his consideration for her; of his delicacy and

kindness. "I may trust him," thought she, "but how will this aunt receive me? Can she know our feelings for each other?" She sighed deeply. At last Dunallan addressed her in a tone so very serious, yet so mild, that it immediately arrested her attention.

"I ought, I believe, my dear Catharine, to prepare you for some singularities which you will meet at Arnmore. You know my opinions on some subjects are very different from those you have been accustomed to consider just and rational. At Arnmore you will find those opinions influence all around you, and this at first may be irksome, or even may disgust you; but let me intreat you not to form your opinions until you have examined for yourself. Do not let prejudice mislead you. I once thought as you now do, Catharine: may heaven avert from you the painful means by which my eyes were opened."

Catharine listened with fixed attention.

"I will not say more now, Catharine; I only ask that in one thing you will oblige me. I do not prescribe to you, however, remember, dearest Catharine."

"Whatever you ask," interrupted she, "I am ready to comply with."

"All I wish is, that you will submit to some new forms you will find in our mode of living at

Arnmore—at least until you are convinced they are wrong.”

“Is this all?” said Catharine. “But may I ask what are those opinions which I still entertain, and by the relinquishing of which you think your eyes were opened? What are they?”

“One is, my dear Catharine,”——

An acclamation of joy interrupted Dunallan. “It is Mr. Dunallan! They are coming! They are coming! Welcome! Welcome! God bless you, Sir,” echoed on all sides, and the carriage was instantly surrounded by people,—young, old, women, children, all joined in the shout of joy and welcome. Catharine shrunk back; Dunallan intreated her not to be disturbed, saying he would “stop those congratulations, so unseasonable,” added he.

An old man now approached, his blue bonnet in his hand, and his gray hairs gently moved from his thin temples by the wind. “God bless you, Sir! God bless your lady!” Then looking with apparent delight at Catharine, “May she, for your sake, Sir, be as gude as she is bonny! We have come to be the first to meet and wish you joy, Sir.” Then addressing Catharine, “There’s no ane amang us but wad hae been wanderers in a strange country, and cast out frae our hames, if it had na been for our young laird; but he likes

grateful hearts on his estate rather than new schemes. He's the only gentleman in a' the country that"——

"My good M'Donald," interrupted Dunallan, "We thank you; but have you forgot that young ladies do not like such noisy welcomes. We shall soon see you at your own houses; but let us pass quietly now, and tell my other friends around you, that I intreat them also to reserve their welcomes till another time for their young lady."

The old man now smiled; "I had forgotten, Sir, that one sae near to you could feel aught but joy." Dunallan, colouring, drew up the glass, and they passed on, though the people looked disappointed at their well-meant congratulations being so ill received. When they had left this party at some distance, Dunallan stopt the carriage, and gave an order to a servant, which Catharine did not hear; but the man galloped forward, and, though they passed many cottages and farm houses, there were no more congratulations. The people, who stood in their doors, though in their Sunday clothes, and evidently prepared to bid them welcome, were satisfied with respectfully taking off their hats, while the women curtsied, and motioned to the children to be quiet; or still more anxious to please, some went into their houses whilst the carriage passed, and then fol-

lowed it with a fervently uttered "God bless him."

"And this is the man!" thought Catharine, "who dismissed his father's old domestics without reward, and who, I understood, was the most severe of landlords!" She looked at him. He seemed absorbed in thought, but not of an agreeable nature. He looked sad.

"It distresses me to have your people checked in their demonstrations of joy," said Catharine in the softest tone of voice.

He started from his reverie. "Oh it does not signify; they will have other opportunities. Their feelings are not my present care, dear Catharine. I thought of you, and am anxious to save you from their heartfelt but noisy and perhaps rude expressions of joy at an event which has only caused you pain! yet I should wish you to feel an interest in the happiness of beings who will now be so much influenced by you; for the people on this estate are so devotedly attached to its proprietors, that they will do any thing they think pleasing to those beloved by them."

"Does this attachment go along with the estate?" asked Catharine smiling.

"Certainly," replied Dunallan, and smiled also.

They had been for some time driving slowly up a steep ascent, and saw nothing on either side but the darkly shaded trunks of the straight firs which skirted the woods near the road. When they had reached the highest part of the ascent, the mist had cleared away, and a bright setting sun glowed on the beautiful scenery of Arnmöre, which now lay before them. It seemed as if nature had formed an immense amphitheatre of mountains, to shelter all that was soft and picturesque within their bosom. The castle stood on a rocky promontory, raised boldly from the lake which washed its base, and now reflecting the lengthened rays of the departing sun appeared “a sheet of gold,” with woods hanging in luxuriance upon its deep and broken shores. The descent into this paradise was rapid. Catharine had scarcely time to recover from her surprise and delight, when they entered the noble avenue which led to the castle. Dunallan turned to her. “Let me now welcome you, Catharine, to your new abode, and again declare, before Him who is present everywhere, that you have only to tell me what you wish, and it shall be my first care to endeavour to gratify you.” Catharine hesitated. —“My first wish is to know what you consider right—to live a useful life.”

“Dear Catharine! then you cannot live unhappily; with such resolutions no situation can make you so.”

They drove on in silence. Dunallan seemed to avoid looking at Catharine, and at a loss. He pulled up the glasses, and let them down again several times. Catharine’s heart beat violently, yet her feelings were rather pleasurable. Often during her journey had she asked herself, “Is this the day I so much dreaded?” and even now, though trembling and embarrassed, her heart felt light and happy.

“My aunt,” said Dunallan, with a look of pleasure, as they drove up to the door.

A lady and two children stood on the steps. The carriage door was open in an instant. Catharine trembled so violently, that Dunallan almost lifted her out.

“My aunt Mrs. Oswald, my dear Catharine.”

Mrs. Oswald received and pressed Catharine to her bosom with the tenderness of a mother. “God bless you, and make you a blessing, my dearest niece.”

She then still more joyfully embraced her nephew, and the children clung around him. The servants seemed to join in the general joy, and looked delighted when, turning to them, he said he hoped all were well and happy. He then of-

ferred his arm to Catharine, and led her into an apartment that overlooked the lake, saying in a low voice, while they advanced towards a window, "You will have little more of this kind to undergo, dear Catharine." He then turned to his aunt, and to the children, who sprung into his arms, which he now opened to receive them. Catharine looked at them clinging round his neck, and fondly leaning their little faces on his, with an emotion that brought tears into her eyes. She remembered they were the children of that sister whom he was accused of having treated cruelly. She felt that it was impossible, and that Dunallan's character must have been traduced.

Mrs. Oswald appeared to be between forty and fifty; still handsome, though dressed quite like an old woman; the expression of her countenance very cheerful, and singularly pleasing, from its lively openness. She addressed Catharine with such sweet and easy kindness, yet with so much of the dignity of an elder woman and a parent, that Catharine at once felt affection and respect for her.

Dunallan brought the children to Catharine. "I regard these little girls as my children. They are orphans, or more than orphans," added he, in a lower tone. "Do you like children, Catharine?"

“Extremely,” replied she; and her manner to them showed that she also knew how to win their little hearts.

An hour after, the party were seated in the same window; Mrs. Oswald and Catharine becoming every moment more intimate, and an expression of regard and admiration increasing in the countenances of both, while Dunallan listened to their conversation in almost silent pleasure. One of the little girls kept close to him, and seemed never to tire of looking at him. Her lovely little fair head rested on his breast, and formed a beautiful contrast with the manly complexion and dark hair of Dunallan, who truly seemed to feel all a father’s tenderness for her. The other child had been won by Catharine’s caresses to remain with her, and sat in her lap, her eyes fixed on Catharine’s face as she spoke, and now and then attracting her notice by her little attempts to join in what passed. The children’s maid at last appeared, to summon them to bed. They flew to Dunallan, to be again folded to his breast. “Good night. God bless my dear little girls,” said he, kissing them affectionately.

“Good night, aunt Oswald, good night,” and approaching Catharine, “what shall I call you?” said the little thing who had been in her lap.

Catharine hesitated, and blushed.

“ Aunt Dunallan,” said Mrs. Oswald.

“ Good night, aunt Dunallan, my dear aunt Dunallan. But why are you my aunt ?” asked the child.

“ Go, go,” said Dunallan quickly.

They flew away, but the eldest returned and looked in Dunallan’s face. “ Were you angry ?” “ No.” He whispered something in her ear ; she looked at Catharine, who held out her hand to her. The child approached and kissed the hand she offered with a look as if she thought her something very mysterious, and then went away.

When the children retired, Catharine felt the smallness of the party a restraint. She turned to the window. The lake still glowed with the reflection of the sky. Dunallan rose and stood by her. Mrs. Oswald drew her chair closer, and kindly taking Catharine’s hand in hers, “ Let us have no reserves, my dear Catharine,” said she, “ no secrets. I know all about you—you probably know something about me too—enough, at least, to lead you to believe that I have nothing to do in this world now, but to prepare for another, and endeavour to promote the happiness of those around me, as far as I may have the means of doing so. I know with what reluctance you came to us—a most natural reluctance. But try to forget all these unhappy circumstances, and

to look upon us as relations with whom you are still unacquainted. Try to banish all prejudice against us."

Catharine warmly returned the pressure of her hand with which Mrs. Oswald concluded. "I shall try to forget every thing," replied she with emotion, "but your reception of a person who must unintentionally have occasioned you much pain. I too wish most anxiously for perfect openness. I acknowledge I did come to you with reluctance; and," added she, smiling sweetly, "I believe my presence was not greatly desired. I intreat you will also forget all prejudices against me."

"Oh," said Mrs. Oswald, "we know there have been attempts to sow discord, when every benevolent feeling ought to have led to the reverse."

A servant now entered, said something in an under tone of voice to Dunallan, and then retired.

"Catharine," said Dunallan, with some embarrassment in his manner, "I have now to intreat you to join us in one of the singular customs I prepared you to meet at Arnmore."

"Certainly," replied she, accepting the arm he offered, though she began to tremble from apprehension of she knew not what. Mrs. Oswald leant on Dunallan's other arm, and he led them into the library, where a number of servants were

assembled. They stood respectfully, until Dunallan placed Catharine and his aunt, one on each side, and then seated himself between them. A table stood before him, on which lay a large Bible and other books. He turned over the leaves of one, and when he had found the hymn he sought, presented it to Catharine, and then named it to the others. Dunallan himself began the song of praise, but he appeared embarrassed, and his voice at first was scarcely audible. Mrs. Oswald, however, the instant she caught the air, joined her full clear notes, with which the servants soon mingled theirs. Catharine could not join. She now found herself present at one of those very scenes which had, during Dunallan's late visit at her father's, been frequently chosen by St. Clair as the subject of his most pointed ridicule, and which he had described in terms so completely ludicrous, that Catharine had often joined in the laugh he excited. It was true she had many times, during her evening walks at Dunallan Castle, stopped to listen to the hymn of the cottagers, and St. Clair himself had participated in the pleasure excited by those strains of simple piety; but a gentleman, a man of education, knowing the habits of the world, himself singing psalms, acting parson before his family and domestics! How utterly ridiculous! Catharine

now remembered how often Dunallan had been present when such scenes had been the subject of ridicule, and also how much the gravity of his looks, or his defence of those who engaged in them, had increased St. Clair's eagerness to hold them up to derision. It was impossible Dunallan could have forgot all this, or the part she herself had taken ; and she now felt ashamed, and ventured not to join, feeling that if she did, he must regard her, during a service esteemed sacred by him, as a mere hypocrite—the character she had been taught to associate with the idea of those in her own class who made any such open parade, she once would have called it, of religion. While Catharine sat occupied with these thoughts, her head bent forward over her book of hymns, and her colour heightened by so many recollections, and by the consciousness that she must be an object of attention to those around her, Dunallan had regained his self-command, and his fine manly voice now bore its full share in the hymn. Catharine's feelings, however, remained contradictory and confused. The melody was sweet and pleasing. Surely it must be right thus to join in worshipping God, but still her early associations of ridicule returned, and she felt relieved when the hymn was concluded. Dunallan then began to read a portion of scripture, in a voice

so deeply serious and impressive, that Catharine's whole attention was rivetted to the subject. She was in the habit of reading the scriptures at stated times, and admired and loved particular passages; but, on the whole, the sacred volume appeared to her involved in an obscurity which she thought it almost culpable to remark, even to herself. She had imbibed this impression in her early childhood, from the veneration with which her mother taught her to regard the word of God, and which was ever afterwards associated with the sacred idea of her departed parent. This gave her an uneasy and superstitious apprehension when she ventured to use her own powers of reasoning on any point she could not comprehend, or reconcile to what in other cases appeared reasonable. She had been shocked by hearing others speak slightly on a subject which was connected in her feelings with all that was most sacred. She never, therefore, conversed with her father, or with almost any one on the subject, because she seldom found any one's feelings meet hers. Dunallan's voice and manner, however, recalled her earlier impressions, and she listened with delight, mingled with awe, to the sublime passage he had chosen. When any particularly obscure sentence occurred, Dunallan stopt, and in the most simple and correctly pure language,

gave either his own ideas on the subject, or those of some approved commentator, which to him appeared conclusive, and which Catharine on each occasion felt perfectly satisfactory, and worthy of the subject. She felt grieved when he closed the sacred volume. All now knelt down to prayer; but here Catharine was again less pleased. The deep humility of Dunallan's confessions, she could scarcely conceive to be sincere, and his exulting thanksgivings for the mercies of Christianity seemed unlike the simple trueness of his usual expressions. Yet, as he proceeded, he at times spoke a language which reached her inmost soul; and when he concluded, she certainly felt her respect for him unaccountably increased. The servants, with an appearance of respect for their young master approaching to veneration, gratefully replied to those kind and friendly inquiries with which he noticed some of them as they left the apartment.

Mrs. Oswald held out her hand to Catharine: "How do you like our strange ways, my dear young friend?" asked she.

Catharine warmly pressed her hand, "Part of them very much," replied she.

"And what part do you dislike, my dear?"

"*Dislike* is a strong word. I will not say, my dear Mrs. Oswald, that I *dislike* any part;

but——” she hesitated, and looked towards Dunallan. He had again opened the Bible, and stood with his hand resting upon it, while he seemed to listen for her reply to Mrs. Oswald’s question.

“ May I ask you to read this passage, Catharine?” said he.

She immediately approached.

“ I felt it too sacred,” continued he, “ when arguing, as you have heard me do with Mr. St. Clair. His levity on these subjects was so unconquerable.”

Catharine read the passage to which he pointed. It was this: “ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.”*

“ You remember what precedes and follows this, Catharine?” added Dunallan.

“ I do,” said Catharine, instantly solemnised.

“ Then I am sure you will agree with me in thinking, that our feelings cannot be in the state they ought to be, if we have any disposition to ridicule an act of devotion sanctioned by this example, or if the dread of such ridicule should make us shrink from performing it.”

“ Assuredly, Mr. Dunallan,” replied Catharine, blushing even to tears at the recollection of what she now considered her own impiety. Dunallan

* Matt. xxvi. 30.

immediately changed the subject ; but Catharine, when again alone, revolved it deeply in her thoughts, and felt humbled in her own opinion, while she thought how justly, yet how gently, Dúnallan had conveyed reproof. These thoughts, however, were not pleasing, and she hoped that, on the morrow, she would find means to gain a higher place in Dunallan's esteem.

CHAPTER VI.

TO-MORROW morning came, and, with it, Martin rejoiced to have an opportunity of opening her heart to her young lady.

“ Oh, Ma’am,” began she, “ every one here is so kind ! Mrs. Scott told me, that Mrs. Oswald said she would trust to her to find out the way to make me happy and comfortable ; so Mrs. Scott just told me, and begged me to say frankly, what would make me so on all occasions, for that Mrs. Oswald would be sadly displeased if they did not find means to make my new abode pleasant to me. And, Ma’am, Mrs. Scott says you put her in mind of Mr. Dunallan’s mother, whom she served long ago ; but she did not stay in the house after her death, because the last housekeeper was not a person she liked to be under ; so she went to Mrs. Oswald, who has been so kind to her, that she says she owes more than this world’s happiness to her ; but she says, too, Ma’am, that if you look as gently at her as you did at me when you spoke to me, she could serve you on her knees.” Martin’s next theme Catharine listened to with

more pleasure, for it was all in praise of Dunallan, "who," she said, "seemed to be quite idolized by his servants."

"There is not one of them," proceeded she, "who would leave him to serve any gentleman in the country, Mrs. Scott says; and yet he is very strict, and suffers no servant to stay a night in the house after he has broken through any rule he has established; and this he desires they may be positively warned of when they are hired. He has turned off four men within the last six months, although he afterwards was very kind to them till they found other means of subsistence, and took pains himself to convince them of the evil of their practices. Whenever a new servant enters the house, Mr. Dunallan converses with him in private, and gives him books to read; and he desires Mr. Gray, the steward, to take care that the men shall have time to read morning and evening, if they are so disposed; and, at any rate, they must be in the house; and they are, in general, anxious to read the books given them by Mr. Dunallan, as he often sends for them, and inquires whether they understand, and like what they have read, and takes much pains to instruct them. Mrs. Oswald takes the same care of the women; and Mrs. Scott asked me, Ma'am, whether I had been used with such care at Dunallan

Castle. I said, that nobody could be kinder to their servants than you, Ma'am, and that you always set them a good example; and Mrs. Scott said, that you indeed looked like an angel."

"Oh, Martin," replied Catharine, "you have done me more than justice; you see there may be better mistresses."

Martin began to defend her young lady. "No, no, Martin," interrupted Catharine, "do not trouble your head to recollect all my goodness, as you call it. I hope Mrs. Oswald will teach me to be really a good mistress."

"Oh, my dear young lady," exclaimed Martin, her heart beginning to overflow at her eyes, "I always said, you only needed to know what an angel was to become one yourself; for you have, ever since you were a child, and spoiled by every one about you, always liked that person best who most freely told you what was right, whether they thought it likely to please you or not. Oh! Ma'am, I remember when Mr. Dunallan was a very young gentleman, and you, Ma'am, quite a child, you used sometimes to come away from every body to me, so unhappy and vexed; and when I tried to amuse or comfort you, you used to tell me that Edward (as you called him then) had said you were passionate, or proud, or unkind to Miss Elizabéth; and then

you used to cry so, Ma'am, and say, 'Edward thinks so, and it must be true. Do not say I am good, Martin, but tell me how I can learn not to be passionate nor proud.' Ah, Ma'am! you liked Mr. Dunallan better than any body then."

Catharine sighed, and looked so grave that Martin finished her duties without saying another word. When she was gone, Catharine sat down at a window, her watch in her hand, at once to be prepared for the hour of morning prayer, and to view the romantic scenery which lay before her; but while her eyes wandered over its varied beauties, her thoughts were soon fixed on a subject too powerfully interesting to be long forgot—her own situation, and Dunallan's singular character. Her feelings for him had very much changed since the preceding morning. Still, however, she scarcely knew what she felt. "I have been completely mistaken," thought she, "in supposing him cold and selfish. Mrs. Oswald, and all around him, regard him with as much love as respect. This could not be inspired, unless he discovered feelings of the same nature to them. The children, too,"—she felt softened when she recollected his caressing and fondly affectionate treatment of them. "Amiable being!" thought she, "how much he seems formed for domestic happiness! And in this to be compelled to give

up his own inclinations, and abandon all hopes of ever finding what he is so peculiarly fitted to enjoy : yet so just to me ! so feeling for my situation ! so delicate ! so considerate ! his every look, every word, so calculated to restore me to perfect tranquillity and confidence. Yesterday, at this time, I supposed him all sternness and pride : this morning I could wish he were less gentle—less overcomingly delicate and considerate. The contrast is painful.” The recollection of all she had heard against his character returned to her thoughts. “ What an inexplicable being !” thought she, “ yet why should I wish to know that all these unfavourable traits are false ? I almost believe them to be so ; but I do not wish to know that his manner is really no more engaging than his heart is perfect. I do not wish to know that I have been so unjust to him—so unwise to myself.” She thought of his singularities—his prayers—his strict notions. “ What must he think of me, educated as I have been ? He must feel that I am incapable of entering into his ideas, or of being his friend and companion. He seems to feel for me as a child whom he has been the unfortunate means of injuring, and whom he must therefore sooth and indulge, and lull me, if possible, into a forgetfulness of my real situation. Oh ! that I could convince him,

that proud, and thoughtless, and self-willed, and spoiled by prosperity as he thinks I am, and as I too often feel myself to be, that I, too, aspire after perfection." A gentle tap at the door startled her. She opened it. It was Mrs. Oswald and the children.

"Quite ready! that is right my love," said that kind lady.

The children threw their little arms round Catharine. "Sweet loves," said she, pressing them with tenderness to her bosom.

Mrs. Oswald seemed greatly pleased: "They will not be orphans, I see," said she; "but come, it is time for prayers."

Dunallan was alone when they entered the library. He received Catharine with a look of pleasure; but he appeared grave, and immediately rang for the servants.

Catharine again sat by him; and, whilst she now joined her voice with his in their morning hymn of adoration, she felt as if she partook in the pure devotion which seemed to inspire him. Again he read, and again she listened with the most fixed attention. He prayed; and the earnest desires of his soul for higher degrees of purity in thought, in motive, in action, in feeling, than she had ever conceived, led her to feel the distance at which she still remained from his ideas

of perfection ; while his lowly confessions of time mispent, and his ardent supplications that all might feel the deep importance of the short and fleeting moments on which so much depended, cast a gloom over her spirits.

“ What a degree of perfection you require,” said she to him when the servants left the room. “ I should despair, if I thought heaven required such impossible strictness of thought and motive. Do you believe, Mr. Dunallan, that we are capable of making our hearts so perfect ? ”

He looked mildly at her for a moment, then said, in a serious tone, “ I do not think that we are capable to command a single good thought. Scripture says so, and my own experience confirms the declarations of Scripture to my own mind. But,” added he, “ you seem half displeased with me, Catharine.”

“ I only do not comprehend you,” replied she. “ My dear Mrs. Oswald, I appeal to you, has he not contradicted himself ? He first describes a degree of perfection, which, if necessary, is quite alarming to such erring creatures ; and then says, to prevent all attempt even, that we are incapable of thinking a good thought.”

“ And yet, my dear,” replied Mrs. Oswald, “ contradictory as this may appear, it is the fact ; for the scriptures say, that ‘ without holiness ’ we

cannot see heaven ; and also declare our inability to think a good thought."

" Oh ! do not puzzle me with such contradictions," exclaimed Catharine earnestly, " I wish to know your opinions. My heart tells me I have regarded these matters too slightly. I find that those who attend most to them always have most influence with me. Mr. Dunallan, I entreat you to explain yourself."

" My dear Catharine, I had no intention to trifle with so important a subject. You forget that I was not describing what man may attain by his own exertions ; I was imploring the assistance of heaven to produce in our souls that purity which true Christianity always leads us to sigh after, however deficient we may be."

Catharine sighed, and looked unsatisfied.

" You are not quite convinced that I am right, Catharine," said Dunallan ; " but you know, I prepared you to meet strange customs and strange opinions at Arnmore ; and I think you promised, at least you assented to my wish, not to form your opinion of us till you had examined impartially our reasons from differing from many around us."

" Oh, certainly I shall not," replied Catharine. " I had forgot that I was to act as an impartial judge. From what I have already seen, however,

I feel inclined to expect perfection, and am disappointed when I cannot understand what I see and hear."

"Perfection!" exclaimed Dunallan; "was it not an aspiration after perfection which displeased you?"

"Oh, that kind of perfection; yes, because it is quite different from the kind I mean, and is far too sacred for common life."

"I must not discuss this subject with you now, Catharine," replied Dunallan, taking her hand, and then Mrs. Oswald's, and drawing each within his arm, "because I have an engagement in half an hour, and we must go to breakfast; but, may I ask you to examine the sentiment you have just expressed, and tell me, when we meet again in this place of strange customs and conversations, if you think it—may I say," he looked smilingly in her face, "rational? Catharine, you must not be displeased with me: You know I have always been plain with you."

"I am not displeased," replied Catharine. "If I am irrational in my sentiments, it is not from intention; and I only wait to be convinced."

"Sweet girl," said Mrs. Oswald; but "come away, or this strange man must go to his appointment without any breakfast." She hurried before

them into the breakfast-room, and seated herself so as to leave Catharine to preside.

“Mrs. Oswald, this is your place,” said Catharine, when Dunallan led her to the vacant seat.

“No, indeed, my love,” replied Mrs. Oswald, “I never take any trouble I can possibly avoid.” And she looked up in Catharine’s face, smiling with so much archness of expression, that Catharine seated herself immediately to escape Dunallan’s looks, who stood by her till the delicate point was settled. Catharine felt her face glow, and her hand trembled as she proceeded to do the duties of her place.

“This is always a very sociable hour at Arnmore, my dear Catharine,” said Mrs. Oswald, “always a comfortable, old-fashioned breakfast, from which no one ever thinks of being absent. It is my delight,” continued Mrs. Oswald, “to see every one assemble first at prayers, and then to easy and friendly conversation at breakfast, when our very hearts seem to feel as if the freshness of morning had risen upon them, as our sweet Mrs. Williams says.”

Catharine again felt her face glow, on recollecting the conversation which had passed at Dunallan Castle, and what Elizabeth had heard

Dunallan say of her. "Is Mrs. Williams a near neighbour?" asked she.

"Yes; but we shall not see her for a few days," replied Mrs. Oswald.

"I long much to be acquainted with her," said Catharine, looking at Dunallan, "I shall then perhaps learn what perfection is."

"No," replied he, smiling, "her own account of herself at least is very different."

Dunallan was obliged to hurry away immediately after breakfast. Mrs. Oswald then led Catharine through the house, and afterwards to the garden, and some of the nearest of the beautiful walks which surrounded the castle. Catharine greatly admired every thing she saw. In the house all was propriety, the most elegant simplicity and comfort. The servants seemed most carefully attended to; and in their looks and manner showed the respect and affection they felt for Mrs. Oswald, and their anxiety to recommend themselves to the notice of their young lady. The cottagers they met during their walk appeared equally pleased and respectful. Mrs. Oswald addressed them kindly, and seemed acquainted with all their concerns. "I must show you our village," said she to Catharine as they were slowly returning towards the house. They then descended a wooded path which led towards the

lake; and after many windings, they arrived at a range of rocky cliffs, from which, in extensive and very picturesque grounds, on the borders of the lake, were seen many neat cottages, separated from each other by the rocky unevenness of the ground, or by trees, or small and beautifully verdant fields, or by nicely cultivated little gardens. The mixture of wood, and rocks, and cottages, covered with honeysuckle and wild roses, with their irregular fields and gardens, sometimes surrounded with wood, sometimes inclosed by rocks of the most romantic wildness, sometimes encroaching on the steep sides of the hills which inclosed them all, formed a scene of singular beauty. Catharine contemplated all around her with delight.

“That village contains upwards of four hundred inhabitants,” said Mrs. Oswald, “and their improvement is Dunallan’s favourite pursuit. The late Mr. Dunallan, who never objected to any plan proposed by his son, consented to his attempting this improvement, to induce his tenants to give up their little farms willingly. Dunallan was quite as much aware as his Father, of the disadvantages of having an estate divided into these small farms; but he reprobated the plan followed by many country gentlemen, of at once throwing a number of them into one, and

suffering the miserable people to emigrate with their families to distant countries. He prevailed on his Father, therefore, to suffer the old tenants to remain, but invited their sons to this village, where they receive a small piece of ground, a boat, and fishing materials. The young men are, by these means, enabled to marry soon, and in a short time become so attached to this village, that at their fathers' deaths they have no desire to return to their farms, which fall without trouble into the hands of the landlord. Dunallan's plans have arrived at wonderful perfection, considering how short his visits at home were during his Father's life."

"And why, may I ask, were his visits so short, my dear Mrs. Oswald?" said Catharine. "Surely such cold disregard of a father was not quite consistent with Mr. Dunallan's strict principles."

"I think his conduct was quite so, my dear," replied Mrs. Oswald, "I do not believe a parent's shame can be witnessed by a child without lessening the respect he ought to feel."

"Shame! What do you mean, my dear Madam?"

"Is it possible, Catharine, you do not know the cause for Dunallan's averseness to home?"

"I never heard any cause assigned."

"Ah, my dear, Dunallan has had enemies

near you. This could not be so great a secret, though my nephew has, I know, borne in silence much undeserved blame. You, Catharine, ought to know, however, that when Dunallan resided at home, he was obliged to see in his mother's place, one of the lowest and worst of creatures, by whom his father was so infatuated and enslaved, that even his love for his son could not break the bondage, or induce him, even when his son was with him, to offend this woman, by keeping her from appearing when there was no other guest; for this was the manner in which she chose to show her hatred to Dunallan. No situation could be more intolerable to a man of Dunallan's principles and feelings."

"And he did as he ought in leaving it," said Catharine with emphasis. "I was certain Mr. Dunallan must have been innocent of the charges I have heard against him," added she thoughtfully.

"Have any more such stories reached you, my dear?"

"Oh, yes; but I shall tell you them all, my dearest Madam; for I long to hear Mr. Dunallan cleared from every aspersion. Mr. Clanmar is said to have been led into an improper marriage by him."

"I know he is," replied Mrs. Oswald; "but

here I cannot satisfy you. Dunallan is as secret as death on this subject; from which I, who know him, infer, that Mr. Clanmar has been guilty of something very blameable. I have seen them together, and Clanmar certainly regards Dunallan with more than common respect, and Dunallan professes sincere affection for him; but this is all I can say on this point."

"And Mr. Dunallan's sister," said Catharine.

"His sister!" repeated Mrs. Oswald; "surely it is not possible to represent his conduct to her as any thing but kind, tender, generous——"

"Oh yes," interrupted Catharine, "it is possible to make it appear cruel—unfeeling——"

"What a world!" exclaimed Mrs. Oswald. "Let us sit down here, my dear Catharine, for I can walk no farther, and I shall tell you how cruel and unfeeling he was to her. Poor Maria was Dunallan's sister by a former marriage, and some years older than he. My sister, the mother of Dunallan, wished most earnestly to have the charge of her, but her mother's relations expressed the same wish, and her expectations from them being considerable, her father would not suffer her to be taken from them. A few months after the death of my sister, the relation with whom Maria lived, died also, leaving her a large fortune. Mr. Dunallan entreated me to take

charge of her, as there was no remaining relation of her mother's with whom he chose to intrust her, and his house was not a proper place for a young female. I consented, but soon perceived the difficulty of the task I had undertaken. Beautiful, gentle, ingenuous, and warm in her affections, Maria gained upon my heart, while her want of steadiness, her sensibility, and neglected education, in what was of any real value, kept me in perpetual alarm. Never was any creature more exposed to the dangers of vanity, from the extravagant admiration of the other sex; and, amongst all her suitors, she fixed on the very one I should have least wished her to choose. You have, I dare say, heard of young Mr. Harcourt, and of his unbounded extravagance. For three years before he left this country he was indebted to Dunallan for the supply of every want, though by this means Dunallan's own income became so limited that he was obliged to deny himself every indulgence. At one time he gave up his horses, at another he dismissed all his servants. Harcourt, with the meanness usually attendant on extravagance, received, unblushingly, all these pecuniary aids from a mere boy, as Dunallan then was. At the end of those three years, one cause of Harcourt's extravagance became known, for the first time, to Dunallan. He found that he was depriving him-

self of every indulgence to supply the expenses of a mistress who had lived with Harcourt for several years. This naturally roused Dunallan's indignation, and after having, with difficulty, procured a situation for Harcourt in India, he positively informed him, that unless he broke off the shameful connexion he had formed, and immediately consented to sail for his new destination, he would no longer regard him as a relation. Harcourt knew how dangerous it would be to his interests to displease Dunallan, and promised all he wished. Before he sailed, however, Dunallan discovered that the woman had gone a few weeks before, in another ship, destined to the presidency to which he had been appointed, and where she had a sister married in a low situation. On discovering this, Dunallan came to me almost in despair. Maria's health was then in a very delicate state, having been recently confined by the birth of our little Mary, and the idea of parting from her children, who were too young to be taken to India, had materially increased her illness. I went to her, and proposed her remaining with her children, and suffering Harcourt to proceed to India without her. I found little difficulty in persuading her to do this, her affections were so divided between her husband and children. Harcourt, however, enraged at seeing all further

hopes of receiving pecuniary advantage from Dunallan at an end, first insisted on his wife accompanying him, and when he found that she, shocked by the brutality of his letters, and terrified by his violence when he gained admittance to her, was so ill as really to be incapable of undertaking such a voyage, he threatened to take his children, which last project was only prevented by Dunallan's promise to pay him a large annuity as long as he left his wife and children at peace in this country. Poor Maria sunk under his cruel treatment. Dunallan and I accompanied her from place to place—wherever change of climate, or change of scene, held out any hope of restoring peace, or strength to her wounded mind and weakened frame, but in vain; it is now nearly two years since she expired in her brother's arms, after frequently declaring, that he had been the means of leading her to the only true source of happiness, and had taught her that death itself could be welcomed as the harbinger of everlasting peace and joy. Her children Dunallan regards as his own. The worthless Harcourt still lives, and has married the wretched woman who seduced his affections from his wife."

"Unfortunate Maria!" exclaimed Catharine, "how much is our sex to be pitied!" added she

thoughtfully, “duped by our affections, or sacrificed to”—— she stopt.

“Yes;” said Mrs. Oswald in a gentle tone of voice, “but misfortune is most severe when we have sought it ourselves. There is a great, an unspeakable consolation, my dear Catharine, in feeling, that though we suffer we have not left the path of duty: then we look on misfortune, not as a chastisement, but as a purifier. I hope, my dear young friend, you will yet have cause to rejoice in your generous devotion to your father’s wishes.”

An approaching footstep interrupted Mrs. Oswald. It was Dunallan; he looked at Catharine, then at his aunt——“am I an intruder?”

“Oh, no,” said Catharine, “but we did not hope to see you.”

“We supposed you were engaged for the whole morning,” said Mrs. Oswald.

“On this morning! my dear aunt, no certainly. I hoped to have returned in time to attend you, but you were fled, and I have been searching every walk for you.”

“You must not think of me, Mr. Dunallan,” said Catharine, “I know you have important affairs to attend to here, which must not be neglected on my account.”

“You know, Catharine, what I consider the

most important affair at present intrusted to me. I am sure Mrs. Oswald will leave nothing untried to render your present situation agreeable to you, but I believe you must allow me, for my own sake, while we are together, to join in the attempt: however, my dear Catharine," added he, quickly and earnestly, "your own mind is the source from whence alone I expect you to derive the happiness I so ardently wish for you."

Catharine smiled, and looked certainly not very unhappy.

"You recollect too well," said she, "the account I once gave you of my extreme inconsistency of disposition; but even without supposing that changed, Arnmöre is so new a scene to me, that I shall not soon be satisfied, I perceive, in exploring its wonders; its mental novelties are, however, I must confess, most interesting to me. You know, Mr. Dunallan, you have to convince me, that a sentiment I expressed this morning was very irrational."

"Yes; at least I wished you yourself to discover that it was so."

"I have not yet had time to examine it."

"I know you have not, and I almost wish to decline entering on a subject so very serious, when I recollect how frequently I have heard you

say, that you detested preaching out of the pulpit."

"I entreat you, Mr. Dunallan," said Catharine, blushing deeply, "to forget such foolish speeches of mine. My heart reproached me, I assure you, the moment they were uttered."

"Well then, my dear ingenuous Catharine," replied Dunallan, "I shall do as you desire. Your opinion is, that religion is too sacred a thing to be always present to our thoughts. May I ask you to explain to me why you think so?"

"Because—I think—why, all our lives are occupied with such trifles, it would be almost profane, I think, to mix religious ideas with them."

"But what, my dear Catharine, do you include in your ideas of religion?"

"I include," replied Catharine solemnly, "belief in that great and glorious Being, who has created the universe, and, by his power and wisdom, supports it in existence; whose attributes are beyond our comprehension, but who has, in mercy, sent his Son to reveal his will to us, and to set us an example of the most perfect, the sublimest virtue."

"Well, my dearest Catharine, so far our ideas are the same. You regard that revelation of the will of God then, as a rule to which we ought implicitly to submit?"

“Certainly I do.”

“But that revelation, dear Catharine, talks frequently of ‘acknowledging God in *all* our ways,’ of ‘walking with God,’ of ‘trusting in him continually,’ of ‘desiring to please him in *all* things.’”

“I confess I do not understand such expressions, Mr. Dunallan; at least, the only meaning I can attach to them does not satisfy me.”

“But do they not support the opinion that religion may, and ought to be, our constant guide in every thing?”

“They certainly do.”

“Can you recollect any thing in revelation, Catharine, which forbids or condemns innocent pleasures?”

“No, nothing.”

“Or any precept which it would not increase our real happiness to obey?”

“No, not one.”

“Then why do you think its rules are too sacred to be always present, even in our most cheerful thoughts?”

“I shall perhaps be convicted of being irrational, I see,” replied Catharine, smiling, “yet my *feelings* still say, that religion would not be at all suitably mixed with our usual occupations, or even opinions.”

“ Most true, my dearest Catharine, your feelings say perfectly right; but ought not our occupations and opinions to be made suitable to religion? are we rational in professing ourselves Christians, while our usual, common opinions and occupations are such as to necessarily banish the ideas which Christianity inspires?”

“ No, I must allow we are not. But I fear you must entirely new-model the world, Mr. Dunallan, before you will be able to prevail on it to be always influenced by such pure and sacred principles.”

“ Ah! Catharine, that is the way we all attempt to escape from disagreeable truths: but each individual of that world has the charge of one heart and one life only.”

“ But that one heart may itself require to be changed perhaps,” said Catharine.

“ Not perhaps, dear Catharine, most certainly every heart does. Oh, that I could convince you,” added he with great earnestness and emotion, “ that you will never know what real happiness is until that one heart is so changed as to willingly, anxiously, desire and endeavour to submit its opinions, its wishes, its choice of occupations, its very feeling, to be influenced and guided by revelation.”

“ I wish it was,” replied Catharine seriously,

“but, indeed, I do not expect it ever will. It is not in my nature, I fear, to be a saint,” added she more gaily, “I must rest satisfied with a more common degree of goodness.”

Dunallan seemed disappointed, and remained silent.

“Do not look so grave, Mr. Dunallan,” said Catharine, “I shall try to do whatever you wish me.”

“Even to become a saint,” asked he, smiling, but rather sadly.

“Yes; even to become a saint, if that is indispensable,” replied she, accepting the arm he offered, and following Mrs. Oswald, who had risen, and was proceeding on her walk. Mrs. Oswald, however, acknowledged she was fatigued, and Catharine insisted on deferring her visit to the village until next day.

Dunallan studiously avoided the subject of religion during the remainder of the day, though Catharine made many attempts to introduce it. She felt that he had reason to be dissatisfied with the levity of her reply to the earnest kindness of his wishes for her, and she sought for an opportunity to obtain his forgiveness; but she sought in vain. Dunallan found means to change the subject the moment she introduced it, and conversed so agreeably about other things, that for a

time she forgot her wish ; but some new proof of kindness or consideration on his part soon again brought her fault to her recollection with increased regret.

“ Mr. Dunallan,” said she at last, when the evening was far spent, “ you will not give me an opportunity to ask your forgiveness for my unpardonably foolish reply to the interest you expressed in my improvement this morning. I think you would forgive me if you knew how much pain the remembrance of it still gives me.”

“ I do, from my heart, forgive you, my dear Catharine, though, I confess, you disappointed me. Will you, in your turn, forgive me, if I speak very plainly, very seriously, to you now ?”

“ Indeed I will. I wish you, Mr. Dunallan, always to speak so to me.”

“ Then, my dearest Catharine, I think I ought to remind you, that even a slight degree of levity on such subjects requires forgiveness from a higher source. You may *pain* your friend, but the right to be displeased is not mine. Am I too solemn, Catharine ?”

“ You are indeed, very solemn, Mr. Dunallan,” replied Catharine, tears starting into her eyes.

“ But am I improperly so ?” asked he, with an expression of concern in his countenance.

“ I cannot tell, perhaps not.”

“ Will you examine?”

“ I certainly will.”

“ And can you forgive my plainness?”

“ Yes ; and whatever I may feel, I still wish you to be perfectly so with me.”

When Catharine was again alone, she reflected on this conversation, almost wishing to find that Dunallan had been too severe ; but the more seriously and candidly she examined the subject, she felt the more convinced that he was right, and that her own mind and feelings were far too slightly alive to the deep importance of religion, and all that was connected with it. Her esteem for Dunallan increased. She felt also that he was deeply interested in her, as every word and look expressed it. The conviction of this was now delightful to her, and animated her with the most earnest desire to understand his character and opinions. She felt certain they were right, and determined to attempt at least to comprehend them. Her imagination easily passed over every difficulty, and pictured the time when she and Dunallan should be united in opinions, in wishes, in pursuits, perhaps in affections. The waking dream was delightful—too delightful to be forsaken, till sleep at last mingled with it its still more unlikely visions.

CHAPTER VII.

NEXT morning Catharine obeyed the summons to prayers, with her determination of the evening before as strong as ever. Full of her new plans to study Dunallan's opinions, and frankly to avow her wish to know and be guided by them, she entered the library with her cheek glowing, and her whole manner and appearance unusually animated. Dunallan was alone, and rose to meet her.

"I need scarcely inquire for your health, Catharine," said he smiling, and regarding her with looks of evident admiration.

"Inquire for my mind's health," replied she, smiling playfully.

"Those looks, Catharine, bespeak a tranquil mind also."

"Well, perhaps they may, for I have just formed a resolution which I hope will in future secure my peace of mind."

"May I ask what that resolution is?"

"Yes, for I cannot put it into execution without your consent."

“ My consent, dear Catharine ! You have it then, whatever your resolution is.”

“ Ah, Mr. Dunallan, you do not know what you have promised. Nothing less than to assist and guide me in regulating this mind, which I know you think is in a sad state. Do you retract ?”

“ No, dearest Catharine, I thank you for the permission a thousand times. Shall I tell you that I was almost afraid to see you this morning, I dreaded so much that my solemnity last night had disgusted you.”

“ No,” replied Catharine, “ on reflection I was convinced you were right. But, tell me, how shall I begin the attempt to feel more, and think more, as I ought to do on religious subjects ?”

The entrance of Mrs. Oswald and the children prevented Dunallan’s reply. Catharine felt disappointed, as the servants immediately followed.

“ We shall not be interrupted,” said Dunallan, as he led her to the seat next himself, “ your inquiry can be answered from Scripture ;” and he immediately began to read some verses of a Psalm, in which her question was asked and answered.

Catharine was affected ; and her voice, as she sung, betrayed her emotion. Her mingled feel-

ings were almost oppressive, until Dunallan's prayer gave them language and utterance. She fervently joined in his humble but joyful thanksgivings, for her heart overflowed with gratitude: and when he supplicated with the deepest earnestness that light might be imparted to the still young and ignorant—that their hearts might be attracted and devoted to their Creator while in the first glow of their early affections—that the great Shepherd of the sheep would gather his lambs into his fold, and preserve them there safe from the allurements and pollutions of the world—the ardent desires of her soul followed his every request, and she felt a delight in these aspirations of devotion, greater than she had ever experienced from any earthly enjoyment.

“You did indeed answer my question,” said she afterwards to Dunallan, “and I understood you my true friend.”

On this morning Dunallan had no engagement, and offered to attend Catharine to his village. Mrs. Oswald begged she might be excused from going.

“I really am too old to be able to walk every where with you my two young friends,” said she, “and to-day I must visit my school; but if you will call on me there, I shall return home with you.”

“ You seem unwilling to trust yourself with me, Catharine,” said Dunallan rather reproachfully, as she hesitated about leaving Mrs. Oswald.

“ I am not indeed,” replied she blushing, and immediately rose to accompany him.

The day was charming. Dunallan proposed walking to the village by a different way from that Catharine had gone the day before. This was longer, but still more romantic and beautiful, and in several places opened on the most extensive and magnificent views of the lake and surrounding scenery.

In Dunallan Catharine at last found one who felt the charms of nature with rapture even greater than her own, and who expressed his admiration in a language to which her every feeling replied. She stopt at each step to admire some new beauty. Dunallan appeared delighted with her enthusiasm, and continued to lead her from one picturesque scene to another, that he might point out those views which he himself most admired. Their tastes were the same; and Catharine warmly assented to Dunallan’s remark, that the scenery round Arnmore was exactly the kind which most powerfully excited those feelings of admiration, “ which are so delightful,” added he, “ so purely so, when they elevate the thoughts

and affections to the source of all beauty and greatness."

"But we are far beyond the village," said Dunallan at last, after they had long wandered on, regardless of time or distance. "Thus we pursue pleasure," added he, "to the neglect of every thing else."

"But this surely is innocent pleasure," said Catharine.

"Most innocent, and you can visit my poor village at any time."

"Oh, indeed! I long very much to see your village. I shall probably there also forget how time flies."

"Ah! Catharine, I wish I knew how to make the time always appear so short to you."

"I think I never found it pass away so rapidly as at this Arnmore, which I expected would be so very different," said Catharine gaily. "But I fear Mrs. Oswald must now be waiting for us at her school. We must bid adieu to these charming scenes."

"You expected Arnmore was to be sadly dull and tiresome," said Dunallan, as he conducted Catharine by a short path through the woods to Mrs. Oswald's school.

"Indeed I scarcely knew what to expect, Mr. Dunallan. But all that is past. You have pro-

mised to assist me in forming myself into a fit inmate for this strangely interesting place. How shall I begin? I long to make the attempt—but here is Mrs. Oswald come to meet us. Oh! that is too bad.”

“ Indeed I might as well have accompanied you,” said Mrs. Oswald. “ Here have I been wandering in every direction in search of you, after having staid at my school an hour longer than usual; and nobody at the village, or any where else, had met you. Where can you have concealed yourselves?”

Catharine attempted to apologise for her inattention; but Mrs. Oswald interrupted her.

“ No apologies, my dear. I shall always excuse you forgetting me, if Edward is the cause.” Mrs. Oswald added aside to Catharine, who had turned away blushing, “ and now, my dear, I have punished you more than I wished;” and she then said aloud, “ I am sure from both your looks, time has passed away agreeably wherever you have been.”

“ Most agreeably, I allow on my part,” said Dunallan, with an expression of mild but heartfelt pleasure.

“ I hope—indeed I can feel pretty certain,” rejoined Mrs. Oswald, “ that, if heaven spares us all, we shall not soon tire of each other.”

“If one of our party continues to be pleased with us,” replied Dunallan, “I think ——”

“That depends on you, Mr. Dunallan,” interrupted Catharine, smiling. “You have undertaken to make me a rational and religious being, capable and worthy to become an inmate of your Arnmore. But who comes here? Do you expect visitors, Mr. Dunallan?”

“No, certainly,” replied he, following her looks to a path in the road by which three gentlemen were approaching.

“Walderford!” exclaimed he in a voice of joy, and was hastening to meet his friend, but turned again—“Dear Catharine, I fear you may dislike this early call to oblige me by receiving my friends.”

“No, Mr. Dunallan, I shall meet your friends with the hope that they may become mine.”

“A thousand thanks, my dearest Catharine,” replied he with the most warmly grateful manner. He then flew to meet his friends. The meeting seemed most joyful on both sides.

“Ah!” exclaimed Mrs. Oswald, “there is friendship! friendship secured by the only certain everlasting bond. You perhaps know, Catharine, that Dunallan is called in the world ‘One of the saints.’ This Walderford is another; and has become so notwithstanding the ridicule

and contemptuous treatment of a very clever but harsh father, and a host of worldly and dissipated relations. He is greatly beloved by Dunallan, who considers him as superior in talents as he is in worth."

Mrs. Oswald and Catharine walked slowly on, Dunallan and his friend soon seemed to be engaged in a conversation of the deepest interest to both. The other two gentlemen stopt at every step, apparently in admiration of the scenery which surrounded them. On their approaching nearer, Catharine perceived that the looks of all the party were directed towards her. This recalled her thoughts to her own situation, and the blush which glowed on her cheek, and softened her downcast eyes, when Dunallan introduced his friend, was perfectly suited to the occasion, had she been united to him from the truest mutual affection.

Dunallan introduced the other gentlemen, Mr. Gower and Mr. Stanly; the former a little man, apparently between forty and fifty, with a countenance full of life and fire; the latter about the same age, but a large, mild, pleasing looking man, with little of any other character in his countenance. Mr. Walderford, however, excited Catharine's interest most, though his manner rather disappointed her. When introduced, he

fixed his eyes on her for a moment with an expression of not very flattering scrutiny; said a few hurried words of apology for intrusion; then turning to Mrs. Oswald, renewed his acquaintance with her in a manner equally rapid and unceremonious.

Dunallan offered his arm to Catharine. Mr. Gower walked by her, and renewed his apologies for having visited his friend at a time when he must be considered an intruder. "Our reason," continued he, "was our despair of seeing Mr. Dunallan at all before he went abroad, unless we had that pleasure now; for business will prevent our being in London, I fear, before he departs thence, as it is much wished he should find it agreeable to set out on his important mission immediately. I hope," continued Gower, "that you, Mrs. Dunallan, do not dread those northern climates?"

Catharine hesitated. "I dread no climate," replied she at last, scarcely knowing what she said.

"I am not so selfish as to wish Catharine to share the fatigues of such a journey with me," said Dunallan. "I have not even proposed it to her."

Mr. Gower looked at Catharine, and seemed to perceive that there was something he did not

understand in Dunallan's reply, and her looks. Walderford began to speak on another subject, which proved to her that he knew exactly how matters stood. She walked on in silence. The happy feelings, and gay hopes for the future, which she had so lately experienced, had fled in a moment, and the idea of Dunallan's immediate departure, she knew not whither, filled her with the most uneasy apprehensions. She looked at him, to read, if possible, some ray of light or comfort in his countenance, but was struck with its expression of dejection and disappointment.

Mrs. Oswald and Walderford began immediately to converse together with much apparent interest, but both in a tone of voice so low, that Catharine only heard that Dunallan's plans formed the subject of their conversation. Dunallan himself continued silent, and seemed lost in deep and painful thought.

When they reached the house, Catharine would have withdrawn her arm, but Dunallan caught her hand: "Will you give me your company for a few minutes longer, Catharine?"

"Certainly; but your friends ——"

"Mrs. Oswald will take charge of them," replied he, again placing her hand within his arm, and leading her towards the library.

“Catharine,” said he on reaching it, “I have delayed this conversation too long. I did not so soon expect I should be obliged to perform a promise I once made to some of my friends. I hoped that before I should be called on to go abroad, I either should have been—that we should have been in other circumstances, or that you could have felt—I wished to have tried at least—I hoped—I need not say what.” He hesitated—then proceeded, “You now know, my dear Catharine, that I am called on to go abroad, in consequence of my own promise. Should you, however, disapprove of any plan I have formed, I conceive it my first duty at present to consult your wishes, if possible.”

“Oh no, Mr. Dunallan, I cannot wish you to change any plan on my account. May I ask how long you will be absent?”

“That, dear Catharine, I cannot exactly tell. I undertook some time ago a mission to Petersburg, ostensibly to convey instructions of an important nature to our ambassador there; but the truth is, my mission regards a private negotiation, which relates more to the cause of religion, than to the politics of the day; and which, though countenanced, and indeed favoured by government, did not originate there. When I first thought of undertaking this mission, I did not

expect that any new tie I should form could bind me to home. I acknowledge I had yielded too much to prejudice; but I must not speak on this subject. My first motive really was a desire to benefit my fellow-creatures. If with this I mixed others less pure, I deserve to feel as I now do, for having agreed to leave a home, which, when I am about to banish myself from it, seems almost a paradise."

Catharine remained silent, a multitude of confused ideas followed what Dunallan had said; but his regret at leaving home was that most distinctly present. "And why," thought she, "not take as much as possible of home with him?" Yet she had not courage to propose herself accompanying him, though at that moment she could have done so, had not a certain doubtfulness as to whether he included her in his sources of happiness deterred her.

"Mrs. Oswald, I am sure, would willingly make a home for you in any part of the world, Mr. Dunallan, and your dear children—the climate is good."

"Mrs. Oswald and the children!" interrupted Dunallan, who had eagerly watched Catharine's countenance, as she continued buried in thought; he looked reproachfully at her for a moment, then turned away, she thought proudly, and walk-

ed to a window, where he remained turned from her for a few moments. He, however, soon recovered himself, and resumed his place near her.

“I cannot wish Mrs. Oswald to undertake such a journey,” said he in his usual gentle tone of voice, “and the children must not leave this country. But now, Catharine, may I ask what would be your wishes?”

Catharine had felt hurt by his manner of replying to the proposal of Mrs. Oswald’s accompanying him. “I never understand him,” thought she, dreading to make any answer. Dunallan, however, waited till she should.

“If,” said she at last, “Mrs. Oswald would remain here, and allow me to continue with her and the sweet children, I should prefer that to any other situation.”

“Mrs. Oswald is your guest, Catharine; and I am sure will remain with you as long as you wish it.”

“And does this plan please you, Mr. Dunallan?” asked Catharine, timidly.

“Yes,” replied he, languidly.

“Not quite, I think. Tell me any other. I only wish to please you.”

“And this pleases me most, dear Catharine, since ——” he stopt.

“Since what?”

“ Nothing.”

“ Are you now keeping your promise to be quite plain with me, Mr. Dunallan ?” asked Catharine rather reproachfully.

“ Yes, dearest Catharine, I have been too plain ; but I see too well how it is. I must leave you, and in that event, your wishes are exactly mine ; and may the God of heaven be your guide, support, and happiness.” He then hastened from her, and Catharine, surprised and moved, retired to her own apartment to think on what had passed. She had never before seen Dunallan so much agitated ; and she found it was infectious. “ What can he mean,” said she to herself, “ is it possible that parting from an aunt and two children, can move such a man as Dunallan ?” She dared scarcely admit the idea that separation from herself could have caused emotions so painful. Indeed she could not believe it, for she had been accustomed to the devoted attentions of others, and gentle, considerate, and ever attentive as he was, Dunallan had never till the last half hour betrayed one emotion that she could have construed into what she considered that kind of regard. Yet why such emotion ? Why, if he wished it indeed, did he not ask her to accompany him ? Surely he could not expect her to offer—uninvited. Impossible. In vain she attempted

to account for his extreme agitation. She could not, however, altogether banish the idea that she herself was the cause. At one moment her gratitude to him, and her increasing admiration for his character, joined to this softening thought, led her to long for an opportunity of proving to him how much she valued that character, and that regard; but the next, she shrunk from the idea of any explanation that might lead her to leaving her country, her father, Elizabeth, every person, every thing, she had ever known or loved, to accompany alone that being whom she had, till within the last few days, regarded with dread and aversion. Again, the idea of Dunallan's kindness would return; his gentleness, the enthusiastic affection he inspired in those around him, his solitary feelings amongst strangers in a strange land. It was from reflections of the last kind that she was again called to meet Dunallan. His manner, however, soon chased them away. All appearance of unusual tenderness and emotion was gone. He was even less gentle than usual. He seemed again that Dunallan whom she had so long regarded with dread. His manner, however, soon became as gentle as usual, and his countenance, though still thoughtful, resumed those mild and feeling expressions which had been gaining on Catharine's affections every mo-

ment since she had left her father's roof; and when he entered into conversation with his friends, she soon forgot all that was past or future while listening to him. The subjects of conversation were not new to her, but many of the opinions expressed by Dunallan and his friends were entirely so. They all seemed anxious to engage her to join in what passed, and soon succeeded. She began with great animation to defend those opinions she had been accustomed to consider just, but which she now heard regarded as erroneous. Her looks and manner had more effect, perhaps, than her arguments, but Mr. Gower in vain attempted to follow her half playful, half serious, sometimes fanciful, but always ingenious and lively defence of her own sentiments. He was lost in the maze, though quite unconvinced, and she turned from him to Mr. Walderford, declaring she had converted one opponent, and gaily demanding whether he too did not find her arguments quite unanswerable?

He smiled, and asked, "on what subject?"

"On every subject we have conversed upon," replied she; "but particularly respecting candour, and charitable opinions of others."

"You say, I believe, Madam," replied he, "that charity consists in—may I ask you to re-

peat what? I may perhaps do injustice to your definition."

"Why, I think it consists in—in—. I do not remember that I said what it consisted in. I only said I thought it very uncharitable to suppose people devoid of religious principle when we were ignorant of their opinions on the subject.—a subject which is with many, and I think ought to be with all, confined to their own hearts,"

"How is that possible, Madam?" asked Walderford, fixing his mild but inquiring eyes on Catharine.

"Why not?" replied she. "I think"—She hesitated, Walderford looked so serious, though very mild.

"Do we not imply, when we talk of a principle," continued he, in a gentle tone of voice, "something which is the source or motive of action; and is it possible that our actions or opinions will not betray it, if any strong principle has possession of our minds and hearts? We have a simple but infallible rule to judge by in this case," added he, smiling, "when we see a bush produce nothing but thorns, we are not uncharitable in concluding that it cannot be a vine."

"But the person of whom we spoke is one of the most inoffensive of human beings," said

Catharine; "your simile of thorns applies very ill to him."

"I confess it does; but still, let me ask, what good to himself, or to any living creature, has his life produced? He is good-tempered, I allow, and, to his fox-hunting friends, very agreeable perhaps; but what account, were he called on for it, could he give of what he has done with his immense fortune, and naturally not deficient understanding?"

"What account could any of us give?" replied Catharine, "but that we have put our fortunes to no bad use that we are conscious of."

"Ah! Catharine," said Dunallan, "you have no chance of success in the argument, if you bring forward such a plea as that."

"Will you assist me?" asked she, smiling sweetly.

"I fear I cannot. I should be found to join your opponent."

"Ah! then, I shall take refuge in flight," said she, "if Mrs. Oswald will come with me."

Mrs. Oswald rose immediately, and though Dunallan's looks seemed to entreat their stay, retired with her young friend.

"And now, my dear madam," said Catharine when they had reached the drawing-room, "tell me what Mr. Dunallan finds so amiable in this

Mr. Walderford? for I think I never saw any young man with such grave and severe manners.”

“Are they more so than you found Dunallan’s at first, my dear?”

“Why perhaps not; but what is this?” exclaimed she, observing a harp placed at the other end of the room, “my harp! impossible! it could not have reached me. No, it is not mine.”

“It is one Edward ordered for you, my dear; it ought to have been here sooner.”

Catharine touched the strings, and sighed deeply.

“Why that sigh, Catharine?”

“Because this attention of Mr. Dunallan’s reminds me of its cause,” replied she; “he wishes kindly that I may be amused in his absence; but this will assist me to express the only feelings I shall experience,” added she, beginning to play a melancholy air, while the tears stood in her eyes.

Mrs. Oswald smiled and said, “I cannot wish you to feel otherwise, dear Catharine.”

Catharine blushed and left the harp, saying, “Mr. Dunallan seemed to think the argument I used before we left the dining-room a very bad one, my dear Mrs. Oswald; pray what does he think we ought to do with our fortunes—give them all to the poor?”

“ No, my love, he does not do that himself; and many people who are otherwise very worthless have so much humanity of disposition, that they cannot witness suffering without relieving it if it is in their power. What Edward considers right is this—that each individual should attempt to form an idea of what good it is within his power to do in the situation in which he is placed, with the fortune, or influence, or mental powers, or advantages of any kind, with which heaven has intrusted him: to form his plan of life after this examination, and to improve and pursue it steadily if possible, while he remains in this world; and this he thinks the duty of every rational being, for all have something in their power.”

“ All !” repeated Catharine.

“ Yes, my love, all. There is scarcely any one perhaps with fewer means of being useful than myself; yet, I hope, I am not entirely a cumberer of the ground. There are some who are more ignorant than I am of the one thing which is of equal importance to us all; I can instruct them. There are others in affliction; to them I can point out the means by which I obtained consolation. God has given me those two sweet children, and while they are intrusted to me, I still have a motive for wishing to live: and should he deprive me of every other means of attempting to prove

my love to him, may I," added she, raising her eyes to heaven, with an expression of deep and pious emotion, "may I be enabled to declare that his support to my soul is sufficient, and thus recommend his service with my last breath."

"You have another means of being useful in your power which you have not named, my dear Mrs. Oswald," said Catharine, softening into tears, "be a guide to me. Mr. Dunallan undertook the task, but he has too many concerns of greater moment—he will soon forget such a promise—yet every word you say convinces me more and more how little I know what is truly right—how much I require a guide in every thing."

"Ah! my love, you must not trust to earthly guides," replied Mrs. Oswald, "you must seek a guide far superior to Dunallan. As for me, my dearest Catharine, my friendship, my advice, my opinions on every subject, my earnest prayers are yours whenever you desire them; and my warm affection you already possess. But, my love, you utterly mistake Dunallan's character, if you suppose any affairs in which he may be engaged, however important, will lead him to neglect those nearly connected with him, and most particularly yourself, now his nearest of all relations. Write to him, my dear Catharine, since you must separate. Get acquainted with him in this way. You

will find him study with attention, and reply in a manner that will perhaps surprise you, to the very least important parts of your letters; and also endeavour to make his agreeable to you, however deeply he may be engaged in the most important affairs. The happiness, the ultimate happiness of the human race is the vast object of his desires. In this he is a citizen of the world; every immortal being is of equal importance in his opinion, and equally worthy of his limited efforts to promote his best interests; but the feelings of a being who would sacrifice almost every thing to preserve the happiness of the meanest of his immortal fellow men,—the feelings of such a heart to those known and loved by him, are of a nature inexpressibly tender. Again, my love, let me advise you to correspond frequently with Edward. I know he will wish it, and I am sure the consequence will be, your feeling for him that affection which will make his return the first wish of your heart.”

“And why should I wish to feel such an affection for him?” asked Catharine sadly.

“I shall tell you why, from experience, my love; because feeling a tender affection for an estimable object is the sweetest, the happiest of all earthly feelings. Ah, Catharine! how superior is that affection excited by great and good

qualities, to that into which we are won, we know not how, by pleasing manners, or an agreeable exterior, while we are ignorant of the real character. How happy, how easy is that wife, who knows that on every subject her husband's principles are as strictly pure as her own, compared to her who loves a being whose past life she must avoid inquiring about; whose principles are guided by fashion, and whose affection and fidelity to her has no other security than her powers of pleasing, or the absence of temptation! And oh! how different must their feelings be," added Mrs. Oswald, with deep emotion, "when the hour, perhaps the unexpected hour arrives of their last separation! To part from him whose peace has long been made with heaven, whom we have regarded with veneration, while we witnessed his increasing nearness to perfection; whose 'path' we have seen 'shine more and more unto the perfect day.' To part with such a one, even with the firmest conviction that he has entered into that perfect day, is severe, oh how severe! but to see one whom we love more than our own lives, called to another state of being—ignorant—unprepared. To look back for comfort, and to recollect mispent time—misapplied talents—contempt of the Being before whom he is on the eve of appearing. The past is too dreadful—we

turn to the future—all is darkness: or if there is a gleam of hope it must arise from a change of views and feelings in the perhaps almost insensible—or suffering—or feverish—or delirious object of our agonised affections.”

“ Dreadful ! ” exclaimed Catherine, shuddering.

“ Dreadful ! indeed,” replied Mrs. Oswald. “ Yours, my dear Catharine, will, I trust, be a very different lot, however clouded the early part of your married life may be; but forgive me for speaking on this subject, I have been led into it unawares.”

Catharine made no reply, but, after a few moments of thoughtful silence, asked Mrs. Oswald to walk out with her. “ Mr. Dunallan,” said she, “ is too kindly solicitous about me; he seems to think he ought to attend to me even in preference to his friends. I must not be ungrateful. Let us go out, and desire the servants to say that the fineness of the evening tempted us, but that we shall return in an hour or two.”

Mrs. Oswald agreed to Catharine’s proposal, but on reaching the hall, they met the gentlemen on their way to join them in the drawing room.

“ Going to walk again? my dear aunt,” said Dunallan approaching Catharine, and offering his

arm, "I hope you will allow us to accompany you."

"Oh no," said Catharine, blushing and passing him, "we wish to,"——she stopt, not knowing what to say.

"I do not mean to intrude," replied Dunallan, in a voice which made Catharine turn back. He seemed really hurt.

"Oh," said Mrs. Oswald, "I must tell you our secret. Catharine supposes that you gentlemen must wish for some private conversation, and that you would feel more at liberty if we ladies disposed of ourselves, so as to rid you of the trouble of attending to us."

Dunallan turned to Catharine. Her looks confirmed the truth of what Mrs. Oswald had said. His countenance softened. "I wish for no conversation, Catharine, to which your presence would not give its greatest interest."

"We all have cause to intreat your presence, Madam," said Mr. Gower, laughing. "Dunallan's thoughts have not been one moment with us since you left the room."

Dunallan reddened excessively, and attempted, but with embarrassment, to change the subject, Mr. Gower, however, seemed to enjoy his confusion, and continued to rally him without mercy.

“ I know why you do not marry, Gower,” said Walderford at last.

“ Do you, Walderford? That is more than I do myself.”

“ It is because you *feel* that you would be most remarkably ridiculous as a new married man.”

Mr. Gower laughed. “ That may be one reason——”

“ Do not seek for more reasons,” interrupted Mrs. Oswald. “ You gentlemen who glory in your liberty, are always most completely governed when you do marry.”

Mr. Gower himself now became the object of raillery; but the conversation soon assumed a more serious tone. Dunallan and his friends talked without reserve. They explained to Mrs. Oswald and Catharine the nature of the affair which induced Dunallan to go abroad; what had given rise to it; and what the views of government, and those benevolent men were, at whose request he had undertaken the mission. Catharine perceived, by what his friends said in conversation, that Dunallan was very highly esteemed by those distinguished individuals. He himself seemed to feel the most enthusiastic and lively interest in the success of his undertaking. Some difficulties were started by Mr. Gower. These Dunallan met with good-natured raillery. Mr.

Walderford's objections were more connected with his feelings of anxiety for the success and reputation of his friend, in an undertaking difficult in itself, and exposed to misconstruction. These objections Dunallan endeavoured to do away by the calmest and most convincing arguments, while his manner to his friend expressed the most earnest anxiety to divest him of every cause of uneasiness.

"You seem to wish to dissuade Mr. Dunallan from undertaking this benevolent mission, Mr. Walderford," said Catharine.

"I confess I do," replied he, "because there is another situation we wish him to accept of, which would keep him with us, and in which I am certain he would distinguish himself; but distinction has no charms for him."

"Distinction no charms!" repeated Catharine. "Impossible! I shall never understand you, Mr. Dunallan. What *do* you value?"

Dunallan smiled, and was going to reply; but Mrs. Oswald answered for him.

"He values that distinction, my dear Catharine," said she, "which will one day be bestowed by his Master in heaven, in those few simple but precious words, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'"

“ But, my dear Madam,” said Catharine, somewhat indignantly, “ do you really think that obtaining distinction honourably in this world, would make him less worthy of that you mention ?”

“ If distinction was his only aim, my dear, or if preferred to usefulness without it, I certainly think it would.”

Catharine was silent for a few moments, then said, half reproachfully, to Mrs. Oswald ; “ and you, Madam, wish Mr. Dunallan to leave us.”

“ My aunt is my best and kindest friend on this occasion, my dear Catharine,” said Dunallan, in reply. “ She assists me to keep the plain path of duty, instead of attempting to lure me from it.”

As the evening passed away, Catharine became every moment more sad. Dunallan, too, attempted in vain to join cheerfully in the conversation. He became absent and thoughtful, and only seemed to hear when Catharine spoke. When she was silent, he continued to look at her, apparently unconsciously, with an expression of the deepest, though most melancholy interest.

Catharine’s heart filled when she bade him good night, and she turned away to conceal the tears which she could not restrain.

She then hurried to her own apartment, and dismissing Martin, indulged her tears without restraint. She continued half the night awake, in deep and painful thought. In vain she attempted to reconcile Dunallan's undisguised tenderness, and evident unwillingness to leave her, with his never, by even the slightest hint, expressing a wish that she could accompany him. At last the thought struck her, that pity for her singular and unhappy situation, of which he had been one cause, had excited in Dunallan's generous and feeling nature those strong emotions she had witnessed. She placed herself in idea in the same circumstances, and thought his feelings were perfectly natural; yet the idea was mortifying, and she attempted to banish it, and to believe, what she now most fervently wished, that their separation was as painful to him as she was forced to acknowledge to her own heart it now was to her.

CHAPTER VIII.

AFTER a few hours of unrefreshing sleep, Catharine rose next morning with her heart still oppressed by the thoughts of the night before. When she began to dress, and saw her pale and exhausted looks, she determined not to betray her feelings, by appearing at prayers, or at breakfast; but soon recollecting that an indisposition so serious as to confine her to her apartment might be ascribed to the same cause, she waited till the bell for prayers had been finished for a few minutes, then entered the library, in the hope that when all were assembled, she might hurry to her seat unobserved. In this, however, she was disappointed. Dunallan had waited for her; and every eye was turned to her when she entered the room. She apologised with much confusion for her lateness, and entreated Dunallan to proceed.

“First let me chide you for joining us at all this morning, my dearest Catharine,” said Mrs. Oswald, “you seem really unwell, my dear

child," added she, looking at Catharine with much concern.

"Oh ! not at all, my dear Mrs. Oswald, only a little headach, which always makes me look thus."

Catharine blushed as she told her falsehood, and meeting Dunallan's eyes, which were anxiously fixed upon her, she again blushed still more deeply.

Dunallan began to read, but Catharine could not listen even to him. Her thoughts immediately returned to the painful idea, that Dunallan's kindness and tender interest was excited by compassion for her, and she determined that from that moment he should have no cause to suppose she was unhappy. At breakfast she affected an indifference, and even gaiety of manner, which ill expressed the feelings of her heart. But Catharine could not long act a part: she soon sunk into silence, and that thoughtful sadness which the feelings of the moment produced. Dunallan, instead of being deceived by her attempts to appear more gay, was even more tenderly attentive, and seemed more sad than the evening before; and Catharine felt relieved when, after breakfast, he received some letters which drew his attention from her. These letters, however, soon seemed to excite a very painful interest. After musing for some time over their apparently disagreeable

contents, Dunallan requested his friends to accompany him for a short time to the library.

“ You have received bad news, Edward !” exclaimed Mrs. Oswald in a hurried and anxious tone of voice.

“ No, my dear aunt.” He then held the letters to Catharine. “ If you can be at the trouble to read these, my dear Catharine, they will show my aunt that I have no cause of uneasiness, but that of being obliged to leave home sooner than I expected.”

He then left the room with his friends. Catharine’s hands trembled so violently, she could not unfold the letter she wished to read. Mrs. Oswald took it, and read aloud its contents. They were merely an earnest desire expressed by those gentlemen who managed the affair in which Dunallan was about to be engaged, that he would join them in London as soon as it was possible, a very favourable opportunity having offered for his going on his destination.

Mrs. Oswald was a good deal affected, and struggled in vain to suppress her tears. Catharine did not weep; she was overpowered. She knew before that he was to leave her soon; but this sudden call for his departure destroyed at once every secret hope of an explanation, or of she knew not what, which she had unconsciously

cherished. Mrs. Oswald soon recovered her composure, and looking at Catharine's pale and expressive countenance with surprise, said, "My dear girl, Edward will not go if you express the slightest wish that he should remain."

"Not for the universe would I express such a wish," replied Catharine; "I have no such wish, for he evidently desires to go;" and she burst into tears.

"My dearest Catharine," said Mrs. Oswald in a solemn but soothing tone of voice, "do not deceive me. You know you promised to be guided by my advice. Trust me, my love; do not let pride or false delicacy injure both your happiness. Dunallan has assured me, that should you wish him to remain, he would consider it his duty to do so, unless you would accompany him, my dear Catharine, which, I believe, would be his wish."

"Oh! no, my dear Mrs. Oswald, that is not his wish. We have conversed on the subject. He never proposed my going. Dearest Mrs. Oswald, I entreat you never mention the subject to him. I would sooner die than that he should imagine that —. Promise me, dearest Mrs. Oswald, that you will never utter a word to him on the subject."

Mrs. Oswald hesitated : an approaching step terrified Catharine.

“ Will you not promise, Mrs. Oswald ? ” exclaimed she in an agony of apprehension.

“ I promise, my love ; compose yourself. ”

Catharine attempted to do so. The step passed, but the next was Dunallan. He appeared so sad, that Catharine’s eyes again filled as he approached. He did not look at her, however, but said in a low voice to Mrs. Oswald——

“ I think I must go to-day—I ought——“ To-day ! ” exclaimed Catharine, “ so soon ! ” her voice changed, and she stopped.

Mrs. Oswald asked if he was quite prepared to go so suddenly.

“ No, not quite, certainly, in any way, ” replied he with emotion ; “ but delay, I believe, will not do. ”

“ Not even till to-morrow ? ” said Catharine.

“ Certainly, ” replied Dunallan, “ I may delay till to-morrow, since you propose it. ”

“ Not for me, ” replied she, hurriedly.

“ A sister might wish this little delay, Catharine, ” said he, reproachfully ; “ fear not, I shall not misunderstand your feelings. ”

Catharine felt relieved. “ Let it be to-morrow, then, ” said she, sweetly, and holding out her hand to him.

He only held it for a moment, then let it go. He seemed displeased; but after a few moments turned again to Catharine, and requested permission to write to her.

“I wished to propose this,” replied she. He looked much pleased. “Mrs. Oswald,” added Catharine, looking round for her, but she had slipped away. Catharine became confused, and forgot what she was going to say. Dunallan looked at her for a moment, then said,

“What did Mrs. Oswald say to you, my dear Catharine, about my writing to you!”

Catharine instantly recollected herself, “She said I should have great pleasure in receiving letters—”

“So it was my aunt who excited your wish to hear from me,” interrupted Dunallan.

“Not entirely; but I should certainly not have proposed it had she not told me that you had time for every thing.”

“Time, Catharine! time to write to you! I shall esteem it a pleasure, a sweet recreation, to which I shall look forward with impatience. You will answer my letters, at least some of them?”

“Will you tire of an answer to each?” asked Catharine, scarcely knowing what he meant.

“Tire! Oh, never! but I shall write very frequently; for I am so sociable and communica-

tive, that I feel but half pleased, or half any thing, till I have imparted my feelings to those I wish to love me. If I could be so happy as to prevail on you to write thus to me, I should feel absence greatly sweetened indeed."

Catharine smiled. "My answers will entirely depend on your letters," replied she.

"Then you will be as frank as I shall be. Oh! Catharine, keep your promise, and then I shall, perhaps, have cause to rejoice in this painful separation."

Dunallan then begged leave to arrange with Catharine those affairs which it was necessary she should manage in his absence; and these he made so perfectly easy that, to her own surprise, she understood all he wished. She, however, proposed that Mrs. Oswald should act for him in his absence; but Dunallan gently urged the propriety of her beginning to attend to such matters, and added, "I shall write my opinion on this subject, my dear Catharine, we must not now lose our few precious moments."

Catharine only needed to know what Dunallan wished, to make any thing interesting to her; even money matters, to which he seemed to attach a responsibility, in a quarter where she had never before considered herself accountable.

"We are only stewards of our large fortunes,

my dear Catharine," said he. "We ought to know, not only that it is not improperly squandered away, but ought to study with deep attention how it may be most usefully employed, and follow steadily those objects which our calmer reflections point out as most desirable to be obtained by these gifts of providence."

Catharine promised to do all he wished; and Dunallan, on his part, promised to write his opinion to her on every subject on which she wished to know it. After this arrangement, Dunallan presented some papers to her: "These, my dear Catharine, are my plans and wishes about my village; the names of the villagers, and many other things which I leave with you to arrange and follow out as you think best."

"Oh! I am incapable of this!" exclaimed Catharine; "Mrs. Oswald——"

"Ask Mrs. Oswald's advice; but unless you fear the trouble, believe me, dear Catharine, such occupations will add to your happiness. Will you make the trial; and if you do find the trouble too great, Mrs. Oswald will I know relieve you."

"And you will despise me," said Catharine. "Oh, do not leave such important matters in my care."

"Will you not make the attempt? I must de-

spise myself, not you, dear Catharine, if I find that I so little know what is agreeable occupation."

"If you will promise then not to despise me, if I fail, I will attempt to do all you wish."

Dunallan had loaded Catharine with occupations before they separated, but she felt gratified to be thus trusted. The hope of hearing frequently from her seemed to have greatly reconciled Dunallan to his immediate departure, and Catharine, too, felt her heart lighter when she looked forward to this means of intercourse.

It was late before Dunallan had finished imparting his plans and wishes. After dinner he proposed spending the evening in a beautiful retreat near the castle, which he still called, "My Mother's Walk." Every one assented with pleasure to this proposal.

The evening was delightful, and this favourite walk of Dunallan's was so situated as to receive all the charms it gave. The lake, unruffled, and reflecting on its bosom, now glowing in the soft evening light, the rocks and wooded hills, which formed its boundary. The more distant mountains, reddened by the bright rays, lay before them—while the castle, rising from its picturesque cliffs, also gilded by the glowing light, seemed to

tower from the wooded dell which separated it from Dunallan's walk.

The scene seemed to suit the feelings of all the party. Catharine felt it calm her spirits, or rather mingle with the sadness she could not overcome, those undefinable emotions which, though full of melancholly, are still exquisitely pleasurable. All remained silent when this scene first opened on their view. Dunallan broke the silence.

“Do you remember such an evening as this at Dunallan Castle, Catharine?” asked he, “when I accompanied you to *your favourite* walk?”

“I do,” replied she, “and this scene greatly resembles that which I so much loved at Dunallan Castle.”

Mr. Gower and Mr. Stanly soon left the party and walked to some distance, wholly occupied with the striking and magnificent views which presented themselves at every step. Walderford remained near his friend. After a few turns Dunallan led Catharine to a seat which commanded the most extensive and magnificent part of the view—and placed himself between her and his friend.

“Do you recollect our conversation on that

evening you mentioned, Mr. Dunallan?" asked Catharine.

"I do, perfectly."

"Mr. Dunallan on that evening," continued Catharine, addressing Mrs. Oswald, "blamed me for ascribing to nature—to an undefined idea, the glory which is due to the Author of all those beauties which surround us."

"I agree with my nephew, my dear, in thinking we are wrong when we banish the Creator of our existence from our thoughts, at the very moment we are most sincerely admiring his works. I have seen many turn coldly away, when that beauty they admired as the work of nature, was piously ascribed to its real Author. There are times, however, when we all wish to derive comfort from the idea of His presence—at least with those we love," added Mrs. Oswald, looking at Dunallan. "We all wish to feel assured that He who so profusely throws around us all those beauties and blessings, is also the tender guardian and protector of our absent friends."

"True," said Walderford; "I cannot help at times, however, feeling indignant, when I hear people who never seem to have any religious feelings, except when some such painful event as separation from friends takes place, then appropriate to themselves all the comforts

which are surely intended exclusively for those who are as much influenced by religion, when surrounded by blessings, as they are when they are in danger of being separated from those blessings."

"But they are sincere at those sad moments," said Catharine, "and every pious feeling will surely be accepted and rewarded as far as it is sincere."

"I should be sorry to despise the slightest emotion of piety," replied Walderford; "but my dear madam, would such feelings be considered of any value in human intercourse? Would you esteem that to be real affection in a dependent which led him to apply to you for assistance in matters where you alone could help him, and at all other times allowed him to neglect or despise your service, and positively disobey your orders?"

"Certainly not; but we cannot judge of the Divine Being by such comparisons—we cannot ascribe to Him human feelings, and human sentiments, such as we experience towards those who treat us ill."

"I allow we cannot altogether—yet we must conceive of Him whom we cannot comprehend, from what He has revealed of himself, and from what He demands of us; and you know

my dear madam, He requires our hearts, which must surely mean the supreme place in our affections."

"But do you understand that literally of our human affections—our common feelings?" asked Catharine smiling.

"I do my dearest madam. I am not conscious of possessing two hearts—two sets of affections—one for common use; and another, sacred, and only to be called forth in sorrows and difficulties; to approach a forgotten, and almost unknown God."

Catharine looked around her.

"I believe we all understand it so, my dear Catharine," said Dunallan.

"Why then, I suppose we all should be of the same opinion," said she "if we explained ourselves; for I should think the whole human race lost, at least with very few exceptions," added she recollecting herself for a moment, "were we to understand it literally. But to be sure I cannot judge of the hearts of others," she rejoined, "I ought not."

"Judge by your own heart my dear Catharine," said Dunallan.

"By my own heart! then I must condemn myself; I cannot stand this test literally. Am I

to believe that any human being can, Mr. Dunallan?"

"Yes, I believe many. I do not mean to say, dear Catharine, that any human being lives, without often—daily, hourly, acting, or feeling, or thinking wrong—contrary to the will of the Supreme Being, which is beyond the conception of our weak and corrupt natures pure and holy; but this perversion of heart, this weakness, this inability to obey the laws of his Creator in all their purity, is the greatest of all griefs to a truly religious being. You know, my dear Catharine, we may be led by our evil passions and tempers to offend those whom we most dearly love on earth; we are then miserable till we are forgiven and reconciled; so are they who supremely love their Master in heaven. They may be tempted to do things displeasing to him, but such deviations are followed by a wretchedness so insupportable, they cannot but feel that their love for Him and His service is superior to all other attachments whatever.

Catharine remained silent and thoughtful for some moments, then said, "Is that devotion of heart to the Supreme Being, the peculiarity which distinguishes those you told me were called 'saints,' Mrs. Oswald?" asked she.

"It is, my love; and I pray heaven you may

soon experience it so powerfully, so delightfully, as to disregard its peculiarity."

"We must not, however, deceive Catharine, my dear aunt," said Dunallan. "The world does not give those whom they in ridicule call 'saints,' credit for really feeling this devotion. They are accused of affecting only to feel it. In the world, a 'saint' and a hypocrite are synonymous terms."

Catharine recollected the character she had heard ascribed to Dunallan himself, and felt the truth of what he said.

"That opinion, however," said Mrs. Oswald, "has been rather shaken by the allowed excellence of character of some of the 'saints.'"

"Yes," replied Dunallan; "but, notwithstanding their unreserved avowal of the principles which influence them, these men are said to be naturally so well disposed, and so sensible and clever, that they are distinguished members of society in *spite* of the strange opinions they have adopted on religious subjects."

"I have often heard these very sentiments expressed regarding them," said Catharine, "and I confess I felt great contempt for the religious part of their character."

"Have you any curiosity to know more about that peculiarity now, my dearest Catharine?" asked Dunallan.

“The very greatest curiosity. I wish to know how they can so command their natural feelings, as really, in the bustle of active life, to be guided by that devotion of heart which you have described.”

“I shall have great pleasure in attempting to explain the enigma to you, dearest Catharine,” said Dunallan; “and those books you have promised to read will assist me. You see I wish you to *become a ‘saint.’* You will find, however, by the books I have selected, that I am desirous of your complete conviction. You will then see both sides of the many arguments which have been employed on that most important subject, whether an absolute unreserved devotion of every power of the mind, and every feeling of the heart, and every action of the life, to the service of our Creator, is required by the scriptures; or whether the vague notions which have so little influence on the lives of the generality of those who profess, and suppose themselves to be Christians, can be all that is required. I have marked those passages which I think most forcible.”

Catharine acknowledged her obligations to Dunallan: “How much trouble you have taken,” said she, “to lead me right in your absence. I shall have no excuse if I err.”

Dunallan smiled rather sadly, "I do feel most anxious, Catharine, for your happiness. You know my opinion is, that we cannot be so unless we are in the right path, as well in affections as in actions."

The other gentlemen now joined the party, and the conversation became more general. Dunallan attempted to be cheerful, but did not entirely succeed; and as the evening advanced, the sadness of the whole party increased, and the conversation partook of the same feelings. The sun soon set unobserved, from the deep interest of these last moments of intercourse. Catharine, however, felt the increasing darkness a relief, and indulged the tears she had found difficulty in restraining, while Dunallan had been addressing her in a voice of such tender and kind solicitude, that every word had reached her inmost heart. A servant approached, to remind Dunallan that it was the hour for prayers.

"Why should we leave this magnificent place of worship?" exclaimed Walderford. "That bright rising moon will light us home. The air is balm: the ladies cannot suffer."

"Let us remain here, then," said Dunallan, "if you, Catharine, have no objection."

"Oh, certainly not," replied she.

“ You may all join us here,” said Dunallan to the servant. “ You, my dear aunt, must assist us with your memory,” continued he.

Mrs. Oswald assented; and when, after a time, the servants gathered together in a group at a little distance, she said, “ I shall repeat a hymn, and all who know it will join when we sing.” She then repeated some verses, descriptive of the feelings of parting friends, beautifully contrasted with the peace and security of that state where there shall be no more parting. All the party excepting Catharine, and most of the servants, seemed to know the hymn, and joined in singing. Catharine listened, as if to an illusion, so unlike was all she heard and witnessed to any scene at which she had ever before been present, yet so completely suited to the exalted state of her feelings. An echo, too, from the cliffs sweetly joined, as if a spirit had been near, and, when the hymn was closed, prolonged the sacred song in notes more aerial. Dunallan paused, till from cliff to cliff the faint sounds died away. He then repeated, in an impressive and solemn tone of voice, several passages of scripture calculated to lead the heart to its Creator, as the only source from which it can find happiness to satisfy its vast desires; and then rising, and uncovering his head, he implored the divine blessing, and light,

and protection, and peace, for all around him, so earnestly, and so particularly, that his prayer seemed a farewell to each, of the most tender and affectionate nature. When he had finished he offered his arm to Catharine. The party then proceeded slowly and silently towards the house.

“And this is methodism!” thought Catharine, as they walked. “This is that dull, gloomy, degrading superstition, and hypocrisy, which I have so long joined in regarding with scorn and contempt.” A feeling of apprehension mingled with her other emotions. “How solemn,” thought she, “is this continual recollection of God. Surely this must be true religion; and if it is, what I have hitherto regarded as such cannot be so. But how few are thus ever mindful of the presence of God? It cannot be necessary, or who is safe? Those few particular people only at whom all the rest of the world laugh? Impossible! I must not be led into this narrow bigotry.” But Catharine could not reason away either her veneration for that religion which so constantly and so powerfully influenced those with whom she now was, or her misgivings regarding her own.

It was late before the party returned to the house; and as the travellers were to set off early next morning, Mrs. Oswald very soon proposed

retiring. Dunallan followed her and Catharine out of the room.

“ My dearest aunt, I shall not see you in the morning—we go too early.”

Mrs. Oswald embraced him in silence. She attempted to bless him, but the words died on her lips, and she hurried away.

Catharine held out her hand to him. “ You will write very soon ?”

“ How soon, dearest Catharine ?”

“ Perhaps to-morrow, when you stop for the night, if it will not plague you.”

“ Yes, ah yes, I shall write to-morrow ; and you will write frequently to me ?”

“ I will, indeed.”

“ Dunallan’s farewell completely overcame Catharine ; it was so tender, yet so solemn. She disengaged herself from him, and hastening to her own apartment, she burst into a passion of tears. “ And this is the same Dunallan,” thought she, “ whom only a week ago I dreaded as the greatest enemy to my peace.” She continued to weep, regardless of the presence of Martin, till, worn out and miserable, she at last consented to go to bed—but not to sleep.

CHAPTER IX.

ALL the next day Catharine felt listless and miserable. She sought refuge in solitude from Mrs. Oswald's composure, and, as she thought, unfeeling activity; for that good lady occupied herself in all her usual employments.

Catharine thought over the last six strange weeks; and blamed herself severely during the retrospect. Why had she suffered the conviction of Dunallan's worth, which forced itself upon her almost immediately on his arrival at Dunallan Castle, to make no impression? Why had she shut her eyes to the noble sincerity, and mild dignity of his manners, and her ears to the good sense, superior talent, and constantly strict principle which had marked his conversation? Why had she suffered prejudice, and prejudice excited by those she knew were his enemies, to blind her to all his good, amiable, admirable qualities, and blind her also to her own happiness, to secure which she should have sought for all that was

amiable in the being to whom she was to look for the peace of her future life? "And now he is gone," thought she, "when I had just begun to feel that I could delight in looking to his approbation, to his affection, as the source of all my happiness." She recollected him during his residence at Dunallan Castle; his polite and manly gentleness to herself on his first arrival there, when she knew he had revolted at the idea of being united to her; his perfect command of temper, and superiority in argument, and in every thing, to the arrogant, but clever and ingenious St. Clair; his unmoved politeness, and even kindness of manner, (when they would receive it,) to all around him, while they were watching every opportunity to disagree with him, or to speak at, or turn into ridicule, what he was known to respect and value. Catharine blushed with shame and self-reproach when she recollected the species of persecution to which Dunallan had been subjected, and the patience with which he had borne it. Even his coldness to her father, which had seemed to increase rather than diminish, she could not help feeling raised him in her opinion. "And he is gone," thought she, "and perhaps for years, to engage in a thousand important affairs, which he undertook to avoid the unhappy being who was to be forced upon him as his wife; and his heart is

now engaged in those affairs, and he will soon forget the last disagreeable six weeks, or remember them only as a dream, an unpleasant dream ! and when the impression of pity for me has worn off, he will forget me too, or only think of me as a troublesome charge ; and, when he sees some amiable woman, whose mind is elevated, and whose heart is devoted to all that is good, like his own, he will then remember me as the insuperable, and, if he could hate, hateful bar to his happiness.”

Catharine could scarcely endure her own feelings, which increased in bitterness the longer she indulged them. She joined Mrs. Oswald at dinner, and felt, in some degree, reconciled to her, on observing that she betrayed some emotion at seeing Dunallan’s place at table empty ; but this was soon over, and Mrs. Oswald began to talk in her usual cheerful tone of voice. Catharine did not attempt to reply in the same strain.

The children were brought after dinner, and Catharine, ashamed again to retire to her own room, and averse to conversation, listened in silence to their prattle. They soon began to talk of their uncle ; and their innocent and simple expressions of love to him overcame her. She rose and walked to a window ; one of the children followed, and mounting on a chair near where Catha-

rine stood, put her little arms softly round her neck. Catharine turned, and concealing her weeping face upon the child, repaid her caresses an hundred fold.

“Uncle Dunallan told us this morning, that we must often talk of him to you, aunt Dunallan, and ask you not to forget him.”

Catharine kissed the child tenderly, “This morning, Mary? did you see your uncle this morning?”

“Oh, yes; aunt Oswald made breakfast for uncle Dunallan, and Lillas and I sat on his knee.”

Catharine felt as if she had been deprived of a right; “had I known this,” said she to Mrs. Oswald, rather reproachfully.

“You should have known it, dear Catharine, had I thought it could have given either of you pleasure to part a second time: Edward knew not of my wish to see him in the morning. It was not a selfish wish; it was a desire to settle some trifling, but to these children, indispensable affairs, which induced me to choose that time, when I knew all other matters were arranged; but it was unnecessary. Edward had not forgotten them; hurried as he has been, he has forgotten nobody. Mrs. Oswald then began a theme, to which Catharine could listen without losing her interest,—the praises of Dunallan. The evening passed ra-

pidly away, while Mrs. Oswald recounted anecdotes of his early years, and described the change of character, which his religious principles had produced, “for,” said she, “he did not always think on these subjects as he now does. He was naturally the proudest of human beings; not exactly from an high opinion of himself, but from an exalted idea of the powers and virtues of the human mind, and from the high aim of his own. He passed through all the early part of his education with the applause and love of all his masters, and the warm affections of his young companions. At college he distinguished himself by his uncommon power of uniting the character of the regular student, to that of the agreeable companion, and intimate and beloved friend of a vast number of the young men at college. He would then have made any exertion to obtain distinction. He studied half the night to gain the next prize, then spent the day with those who valued not learning, but as it could add by the superiority and refinement it gave to the pleasure of the passing hour; yet Dunallan was so strictly pure in his morals, and so regular in his hours, that he was pointed out to his young companions as a model for their imitation; and so much was he beloved, that they willingly allowed his superiority. Amongst these, however, there was one whom Dunallan found to

be his superior, and him he loved with all the ardour of his nature. He was a young man of fine genius, but of narrow fortune. He lived very retiredly at college, having few associates, and wholly devoted to study. There was something in his appearance which greatly interested Dunallan, who eagerly sought his acquaintance, which with difficulty he obtained. Dunallan had heard that the singularity of his new friend's religious opinions, was the cause of his love of seclusion, and in all the pride of reason, he flattered himself that he would easily convince the interesting enthusiast of the weakness and absurdity of those opinions, and be the means of drawing his learning and fine genius into notice. He soon got his friend to state all his opinions to him; and they were in direct opposition to Dunallan's most favourite systems. He felt indignant at seeing so fine a mind acquiesce, as his friends did, in what he regarded as the prejudices of weak understandings, or of women and children. He found, however, that none of his arguments made the slightest impression on his friend: on the contrary, he seemed absolutely certain of the truth of his own opinions, and when Dunallan became heated, and sometimes even contemptuous, his friend continued perfectly calm, and even seemed to feel more affectionately for his proud oppon-

ent. Dunallan at last gave up all attempts to enlighten the enthusiast, but his affection for him increased every day ; and he sought his society in preference to that of all others, though each tenaciously retained their own opinions on the subject of religion. Dunallan strenuously supported the dignity, the great capacity, and virtuous inclinations of human nature, while his friend insisted on its depravity, its perversion of its powers, and its weakness in resisting evil. The friends parted. Dunallan, his own master, from the excessive indulgence of his father ; handsome, of high character for so young a man, rich, and remarkably agreeable, from his natural desire to please, was courted and caressed wherever he went. His friend, poor, and in delicate health, retired to a curacy in the west of England. For the next year Dunallan resided chiefly with Harcourt, his brother-in-law. He must have been more than man, had his morals not suffered in such society. At the end of that year his college friend died. I know no more. Dunallan soon after went abroad. When he returned, to sooth the last days of his unfortunate sister, he had adopted all his friend's religious opinions."

Catharine listened with deep attention ; "he told me," said she, "that his sentiments had been changed by some very distressing cause. He

hoped I would adopt his way of thinking without such painful means."

"I hope you will, my dear. Have you been examining the books he left for your perusal?"

"No, madam. I could not read to-day. I did not attempt it."

"Ah, that is the reason, my love. Had you made the attempt you would have succeeded."

"I believe not," replied Catharine, rather hurt.

Next day, however, Catharine did make the attempt, and succeeded in reading those parts at least which had been marked by Dunallan, and she became interested. The subject was new, and she was naturally of an inquiring turn of mind. This day was less unhappy than the preceding one; but the evening seemed long and sad. She thought of Dunallan's promise to write, and though she scarcely hoped to receive a letter so soon, she waited with impatience for the post-hour. Restless, and unable to occupy herself, she proposed to Mrs. Oswald to walk out, intending to go in that direction in which she knew she should meet the man who brought the letters. Mrs. Oswald seemed to have guessed her wishes, for she immediately proceeded to that walk. In a short time Catharine perceived the man at some distance, and approaching, as she thought, at a very slow pace. She quickened hers, and soon joined

him. After alighting composedly from his horse, and fastening the bridle to a tree, he undid a bag, from which he took several letters, and after carefully looking them over, presented one to Catharine. It was from Elizabeth; and, for the first time in her life, Catharine felt disappointed on seeing a letter from her.

“Is there no other letter for me?” asked she.

“No in this bag, my lady. I hae anither, but Mrs. Allan, at the post-office, guessed wha it was frae, and I hae it better pitten up.”

“Make haste, good Robin Skene,” said Mrs. Oswald.

Robin looked pleased and important, and after fumbling some time in his bosom, brought forth a parcel very carefully wrapt up, from which he presented a letter to Catharine, and one also to Mrs. Oswald.

Catharine turned away, and hastily broke the seal.

“You seemed in earnest, my dearest Catharine, when you permitted me to write so soon; I should not otherwise have yet ventured to remind you of your absent friend. You see how easily I shall persuade myself you are sincere, whenever you express wishes so gratifying to me, and try to forget the many times you have checked my slightest encroachment in my character of

a relation with whom you were still unacquainted. I have been hurrying from Arnmore all this day, but my heart and my imagination are still there; and now, at this late hour—alone at the little inn of——, my fancy is still busy at Arnmore. I see the party assembled to close the day, by studying the pure precepts, and animating promises of Scripture. My aunt, or perhaps my dear Catharine herself, is reading to her domestics in the absence of her banished, and at this moment very sad friend. Oh, how I have longed all this day to return to my beloved home! But adieu to such fruitless wishes; and now let me begin my correspondence with you, my dearest Catharine, in the character you have wished me to assume. You have asked me to be your instructor in those singular opinions which lead to those singular ways which you have witnessed at Arnmore. You do not know what pleasure this request gave me. It is permitting me to attempt the only thing by which I may perhaps be enabled to atone for what I have done regarding you, and that will be, by freely pointing out those truths to you, without which I firmly believe you could not have enjoyed true happiness in any situation, and the knowledge of which is not dearly purchased, even by very great earthly disappointments or sorrows. Have you begun to read any of my

books? Do you think the village or the schools will interest you? Remember your promise to give them all up if they do not, at least if you think you ought, when you recollect the situation in which you have been placed. Do not suppose I mean to dictate to you, however, my dearest Catharine, but, believing as I do, that our happiness, even in this world, depends upon our being in the path of duty, can I love you, and not seek by every means in my power to lead you into the path of true enjoyment? You would believe how sincerely I desire this, if you knew how dear you are, how dear you were to me before you had ever bestowed a look upon me, but of aversion and disgust. But, adieu, I must not in my first letter tire you of your preaching, but most truly attached,

E. H. DUNALLAN."

Catharine had read Dunallan's letter several times before she recollected that there was any other being in existence. Mrs. Oswald interrupted her thoughts by a request to return to the house to avoid the very heavy dew. Catharine kindly offered her arm to Mrs. Oswald. "You too have a letter, my dear madam."

"Yes, my love, a few lines," replied Mrs. Oswald, holding out the letter to her.

Catharine declined reading it.—"You must

not think me so curious, my dear Mrs. Oswald. I shall be most happy to hear whatever you choose from Mr. Dunallan's letters, but I wish you always to read those passages to me yourself. I shall now read a part of mine to you, which I want your opinion of." She then read that passage, in which Dunallan supposed she had taken his place in reading to the servants.

Mrs. Oswald smiled.—"This is rather cunning, I think."

"I think so too," replied Catharine, "but should like if you, my dearest Mrs. Oswald, would do as he wishes."

"Not I indeed," replied Mrs. Oswald. "He very properly wishes you, my love, to act in his absence as the head of his family; but you must consider, that if you begin this good custom, you must carry it on. Should you suffer the fear of ridicule to make you give it up when people are here, you would, I fear, do more harm than reading at other times would do good."

"I do not think the dread of ridicule would deter me from doing any thing I thought right," said Catharine. "I have never stood much in awe of the opinions of others."

Mrs. Oswald smiled.—"Then, my dear, you have only to determine whether Dunallan's is a right wish."

“ I can have no doubt of that,” replied Catharine, “ since it is his.”

“ Ah ! you ought to have a better reason, my dear.”

“ Well, it must be right to instruct the ignorant.”

“ Yes, my love, and to see that those under our care, which servants certainly are, have at least an opportunity of hearing the divine truths of revelation. We are all commanded to do good to all as we have opportunity ; surely our influence cannot be so great any where as in our own houses.”

“ Well, my dear Madam, this is settled ; and to-morrow you shall take me to the village, and to the schools. I must be able to answer Mr. Dunallan’s questions ; but you must direct me in every thing, my dear Mrs. Oswald, for how can I, so ignorant myself, attempt to instruct others ? I know not what parts of Scripture are proper to be read to servants.”

“ There are few parts which can be improper, my love,” replied Mrs. Oswald. “ You will soon, while informing yourself, discover what is most instructive for others. Happily for the lower classes, which constitute the largest portion of society, it is the humble and unlearned who are chiefly addressed in Scripture.”

Catharine desired that she might be called very early next morning. Her ardent mind was now bent on attempting every thing recommended by Dunallan. She felt convinced that all his wishes were for her real happiness; and she took pleasure in the idea, that in his absence she might fit herself to be the companion of this esteemed friend.

Elizabeth's letter, though left unread for the first time in her life, till she perused that of another, gave Catharine the greatest pleasure. It was written in unusually high spirits for Elizabeth; and, after many playfully kind remarks on the change of feelings with regard to Dunallan, expressed in Catharine's letter, on her arrival at Arnmore, concluded thus——

“And now, my own Catharine, I must tell you a secret, the only secret I ever concealed from my first and dearest friend. You have often laughed at my high-flown notions (as you called them,) of the influence of real affection. Know then that I spoke from experience, and that your friend has been engaged in heart and promise for two years, to a person whose name I believe never escaped her lips in your hearing. You will naturally ask, Why? I answer, because I could only have given you pain by the disclosure, as we were far too poor to think of marrying for years. Mr. Melville is the younger son of a family of very mode-

rate fortune; he is a lawyer, and very clever; but for some years at the commencement of his profession, a lawyer very rarely makes any thing. You know I had no fortune, and you will, I am very certain, feel almost as happy as your friend, when you find that your father's generosity to his nephews and nieces has removed every obstacle that stood in the way of my happiness; and that I so dearly love those who have thus obliged me, that I love even to be under obligation. But I must now introduce you to my dear and disinterested Philip Melville, who in a time of such scarcity of men, and of *such men!* and a time of such plenty of heiresses, chose to place his affections on your portionless, and every way very moderately gifted Elizabeth. But you are unacquainted with Melville, and cannot judge of my feelings in the idea of never being separated from him. The sweet castles I build when I picture myself his wife, welcoming him home, after the studies or business of the day, to his comfortable, (and I mean to be) elegant, though moderate home; exerting all my powers to amuse and please him, which you know must always succeed; his conversation and affection; and his approbation of all I do—my mother so happy in seeing me so—my young brothers guided by Melville, whom they already regard with love and esteem—the

holidays passed at Arnmore, and the dear inhabitants of Arnmore coming to us sometimes.— Dear Catharine, are not my dreams very happy, and not so romantic as to be impossible ?”

Elizabeth’s letter was long, and expressed great enjoyment. Catharine entered warmly into her feelings, and for a time forgot every thing else. Her last occupation, before she retired to rest, however, was another perusal of Dunallan’s letter. “ Ah !” thought she, when she had finished it, “ you have given me a rival in your affections, Elizabeth, and perhaps you soon will have one in mine !”

CHAPTER X.

NEXT morning Catharine started from her pillow the moment she was called, and dressed with a rapidity which seemed not a little to surprise Martin, whom, when her toilet was finished, she desired to inform Mrs. Scott the housekeeper, that she wished the servants to be assembled at the usual hour in the library. She then set herself to read the book which Dunallan had pointed out as the most proper to begin with, steadily determining, that however tiresome she should find the occupation, to read every thing he had recommended with her whole attention. But this book she found most interesting. It was addressed to the heart as well as to the understanding. The subject was, the erroneous and unscriptural nature of the opinions on religious subjects generally prevalent among people in the higher classes of society. Catharine, as she read, felt the truth of every word, and she could scarcely believe that she had been thus employed for more than an hour, when Martin appeared to say, that Mrs. Oswald and the servants were in

the library. Catharine felt humbler when she entered the room where they were assembled than she had ever done in her life before. She felt conscious that she now assumed a character to which she had no title, and blushing before she began to read, she said, "I continue this custom because Mr. Dunallan wishes it. I hope we shall all derive benefit and instruction. None of you can require it more than I do."

Mrs. Scott was on all occasions easily moved to tears; her softness, on Catharine's saying this, infected the other maids, so that her young lady had a weeping audience. Catharine thought their grief was occasioned by their master's absence, and by seeing his place filled by another. When she had finished, and the servants were retiring wiping their eyes, she desired Mrs. Scott to remain a little. "You must not grieve so much, my good Mrs. Scott," said she, "at Mr. Dunallan's absence. Do you know we had letters from him last night, and he is well?"

"Oh!" replied Mrs. Scott almost sobbing, "I mourn indeed for Mr. Dunallan's absence, but it is not grief but joy which makes me cry now. I just thought I saw my own dear lady again, when you ma'am sat down in the chair. She used to look concerned as you did, ma'am, but oh! she had great cause. Her Mr. Dunallan

favoured nothing good, though he loved her so much he could not cross her; but the servants used to assemble here, and she used to read to them, when he was gone a hunting; and at night before he and his gentlemen friends had left the dining room. Oh! I never thought I should see this happy day! Her son walking in her blessed steps; and you, ma'am, brought up so differently; oh! it is more than I can stand;" and she put her hands to her face, and hurried out of the room. Catharine was affected: "poor good Mrs. Scott! she does not know how little I deserve to be compared to any one so good."

So great was Catharine's impatience to see all those places and arrangements which Dunallan had committed to her care, that she thought Mrs. Oswald would never have done with her breakfast. At last she rose, and offered to accompany her young friend wherever she chose. They proceeded first to the village. It was still early. Catharine, however, was much pleased with the clean and orderly appearance of the cottages into which she was conducted by Mrs. Oswald, and at the pleasure which the people seemed to feel on seeing her. After having led Catharine through the village, and visiting various institutions of Dunallan's for the benefit of the people and children; schools, a library, &c.

all which were under the immediate care of the clergyman of the parish, who was to report the progress and success of each to Catharine; Mrs. Oswald led her to another school for girls. Catharine was delighted with the situation of this school. It was apart from the village, in a romantic spot on the banks of the lake, and surrounded by wood on every side except that which opened on the water. A sweet retired path lay directly between it and the castle.

“This situation,” said Mrs. Oswald, “was chosen by Dunallan, in the hope that, whoever the lady of Arnmore might be, she would take this institution under her own peculiar and watchful care. I hope you will fulfil his wishes, my dear Catharine, and regard these interesting young villagers as in some degree your own children. The general rules only have been acted upon, all particular regulations have been left for you, my dear,” continued Mrs. Oswald. “I have found the charge very interesting, but will be most happy to relinquish it to your care; my health and my age make me unfit for it.”

Catharine was equally delighted with the interior of the school-house, and the healthy happy looks of the children, who rose respectfully on her entrance, and answered the questions she

put to them with intelligence and civility, dropping a grateful curtesy when she noticed them. Catharine recollected the children at Dunallan Castle, lying about their cottage doors in complete idleness, or running away to conceal themselves at her approach, or if bold enough to remain, answering with awkward shyness any thing she said to them. But, thought she, they were only taught to regard me as their superior, not their friend and benefactress. She could have staid here the whole day, she became so greatly interested. She liked to hear the children repeat hymns, and parts of Scripture, and was delighted with their eager desire to be permitted to repeat them to her; and the pleasure their countenances expressed when she praised their performances. Mrs. Oswald at last reminded her that the forenoon was far spent.

“Every child at Arnmore is taught to read,” said Mrs. Oswald, as they returned home, “and the clergyman of the parish attends with the most unremitting attention to their religious instruction. He is an excellent man, and is looked up to by the whole parish. You will find him anxious to second any plan you propose for the benefit of your people.”

“How many people are supposed to reside on Mr. Dunallan’s estate?” asked Catharine.

“ About nine hundred, including a small fishing town, at too great a distance for us to visit to-day; but which Dunallan takes the same charge of that he does of those places you have seen.”

“ Happy Arnmore !” exclaimed Catharine, “ Poor Dunallan Castle ! how much I ought to feel ashamed when I recollect how its people have been neglected. And now my father is enlarging all his farms, and the poorer tenants are emigrating to America, or wherever they can go. Had I known that it was possible, or rather had I taken the trouble to consider, I might have had at Dunallan Castle such a village as that I have just seen. The money which I gave without reflection to the unfortunate beings who were leaving the estate, and whose grief I could not bear to witness, would have defrayed every expense : but I shall write my father immediately. How happy should I be to see him interested in such a plan.”

Catharine was so busy all this day, she felt quite fatigued when she retired for the night ; yet her heart was light and gay. She had written to her father, to Elizabeth, and to Dunallan. The two first she had sealed up ; but the last she left to peruse once more. She was dissatisfied with what she had written. It was too long—Dunallan’s was not half so long—yet she had so much

to say—she read sentence by sentence, and determined to change each; but after these changes were made, she thought her letter stiff and cold, and at last decided to send that which she had first written.

Next day she visited the fishing town, and other more distant parts of the estate, and was extremely gratified by all she saw, the reception she met with every where, and by the beautiful scenery through which they had passed; for many of the cottages they had visited were far too distant for Mrs. Oswald, or even Catharine to have walked to them.

“And what am I to do?” asked Catharine, as they returned home; “In what way, my dear Mrs. Oswald, am I to make myself useful to all these people?”

“By knowing about them all, my dear Catharine, and by convincing them that you do, and that you take an interest in their real happiness and prosperity; by your steadily discountenancing the unworthy, and approving of and assisting the good; by promoting the education of the children—oh, by a thousand ways, my dear young friend, particularly by carrying on those plans, begun by Dunallan, which are yet too new to succeed, unless they are fostered and protected by you.”

Catharine, after consulting with Mrs. Oswald, laid down rules for the occupation of her time, which she resolved to abide by until Dunallan's return. "For I shall not leave Armore till then," said she; "and whoever visits me, must allow me to spend some of my time as I choose."

One week passed away, and she kept strictly to all her rules, and felt interested and happy. Mrs. Oswald she loved more dearly every day—she appeared to her almost perfect, and her affection was returned with interest.

"Ah, Catharine!" said Mrs. Oswald, one day after an interesting conversation with her young friend, "I feel I am making another idol of you, I shall never learn to love with moderation."

The children too, were regarded by Catharine with the tenderest affection; and she felt the purest enjoyment in leading their young and opening minds to the admiration of all that was good and beautiful.

She had another letter from Dunallan during this week—all that was kind. To Mrs. Oswald he described his situation in London, and his future intentions. He expected to set out on his destination in a few days. To Catharine, he wrote of herself, and of his own feelings.

"Your letter, my dearest Catharine, has almost relieved my mind from a load, which has

oppressed it ever since my unhappy arrival at your Father's house. You request me so kindly, and I cannot help feeling so sincerely, to believe you when you say you are happy;—you add so sweetly, that you wish me to forget the past, as you are beginning to do, that I feel satisfied you are at least not unhappy. The future, I will allow myself to hope, will produce for you far brighter days. You say you have read one of my books, and are interested in our people. Dearest Catharine, I entreat you, in your ardour to do good, not to forget your own health. You have undertaken too much. I shall regret having requested you to superintend my plans, if you expose yourself to fatigue, which, I assure you, is unnecessary. It is surprising how much influence a very small degree of interest, expressed by a person in your situation, has on your dependents. But I shall say no more on this subject; you know, my dear Catharine, how much it would pain me to think that I, in seeking a source of pleasure for you, had loaded you with fatiguing occupations.

“ You say, my dearest Catharine, that my aunt has made you forget my absence, by talking to you of my early days. She will, I fear, deceive you. She will praise me, when, if you knew what a proud and arrogant being I then was, and ‘the course of sin,’ which levelled me with the dust,

you would cease to regard me with the unmixed esteem expressed in your sweetly frank letter. Will you be undeceived, my dearest Catharine? You asked me once, how the human mind could be brought, in the bustle of life, to be constantly guided by the principles of religion. I promised to explain this in my letters to you, as far as I could. The truth is, that, to a mind awakened from the delusive dreams of this world, religion becomes not only the support and consolation, but the source of its chief pleasures. I shall tell you in my next letter, how far I have experienced this myself; but the story is long, and I am too impatient for your reply to delay my letter till another post. You perceive, my Catharine, that it is painful to me to appear to you what I really am not. Your character is, I think, easily known; and therefore, in my eyes, the more amiable. Men, from their intercourse with a world, where most of those they meet with are indifferent about them, where some wish to deceive, and others to lead astray, acquire a power of concealing their emotions, which gives them an unfair advantage over women, who rarely in early life can conceal theirs. I should wish you, my Catharine, to feel certain that I have not this advantage over you. The very suspicion of it must produce a degree of reserve, which it is the wish of my heart to do

away. I am thus anxious to inspire you with confidence in me, because I so earnestly wish you to feel that friendship for me which I already feel for you, and which cannot exist where we have any doubt of our knowledge of the real character.

“And now, my dearest of friends I shall answer the last part of your letter, in which you so ingenuously confess to me, that you cannot say *you like* the first book I recommended to you, because every page of it condemns you. Your thoughts—your wishes—your time—your influence—your fortune, have all been employed in those pursuits considered by this writer as unworthy of a rational and immortal being:—‘and yet,’ you add, ‘my life has been as innocent, and as little shaded by great faults, as most others.’ You nobly say, you will not affect a modesty in speaking of yourself which you do not feel, when the subject is one on which you really wish to gain information; and you naturally ask if we must look on the greatest part of our fellow-creatures as guilty in the sight of heaven, when most of them feel so secure of being accepted there at last? I acknowledge the difficulty of answering your question; but it is equivalent to that which was proposed long ago: ‘Are there few that be saved?’ You, I dare say, remember the instruc-

tive answer of Him who said, ‘I am Truth.’ The answer was, ‘Enter *ye* in at the straight gate; for narrow is the way which leadeth to everlasting life, and few there be that find it.’ Though my book does condemn you, my dearest Catharine, I must agree with it, because I am sure it is not stricter in what it requires, than that short but comprehensive law, which demands that we shall love our Creator, with *all* our hearts, and our souls, and our minds, and our neighbours as ourselves. I entreat you, Catharine, to use your own excellent powers of mind to follow out the meaning of those words, and you must be convinced that my book cannot possibly require more. Will you be displeased if I say, that I take pleasure in your feeling of self-condemnation? I do indeed, my sweet friend, because I know that, ‘the whole’ do not feel their need of the ‘Physician,’ but ‘the sick,’ and I wish you to know the Physician of souls. I entreat you to read on, and become acquainted with the Christian system. If you feel your heart become an advocate for its truth, before your mind is informed, and your reason convinced, which, I think, from your last letter, may be the case, I entreat you not to cease reading what is addressed chiefly to your reason; because an uninformed Christian in your rank of life, is exposed to having his

belief staggered very frequently, from his ignorance of those perfectly convincing answers which have been given to the attacks of infidels, who have in all ages attempted in vain to subvert a religion so strict in its demands, and pure in its precepts; amongst those infidels there have been, and still are, men of at least very great wit and ingenuity. What a letter I have written! but if you knew the pleasure I feel after the business and bustle of the day, in retiring to think of and address you, I know you would not wish to shorten this sweetest of enjoyments. Adieu, my dear, my very dearest friend.

E. H. DUNALLAN."

Catharine studied every word of Dunallan's letter with the deepest interest; his wishes with regard to herself she scarcely understood; but she determined to read attentively every book he recommended to her, and frankly avow to him the impression they made on her mind. His extreme openness with regard to himself, had fully the effect he desired in gaining her confidence. She felt ready to impart to him the most secret thoughts of her heart. This desire to make her acquainted with his very errors, rather than that she should form a false and too high opinion of him, though it gratified, yet startled her. She

had often been advised by her father, to avoid seeking to know the preceding private life of the man she married. "Let me, my dear child," he would say, "be intrusted with making all necessary inquiries respecting his character. You cannot be a judge. An innocent, well-educated young woman would never marry, if she knew the private history of most of the young men she sees; but we must take the world as we find it," he would add laughing. "The noblest characters have defects. An amiable, sweet-tempered, sensible, affectionate wife will cure a man of all those youthful errors; but a prying, over-correct wife is the devil." Catharine believed her father, and looked on young men as privileged to be wicked to a certain degree; and regarded it as indelicate, and disgustingly over-correct in her sex, to take any concern how a young man spent his life in private, provided he always acted honourably, and as others did in society. Had Dunallan, then, been particularly faulty? She could not believe this, because her father had assured her, that even *she* might be satisfied with all he could learn respecting the morality of his early years, which had been singularly spotless. Catharine replied with perfect frankness to this part of Dunallan's letter. She showed how much she valued his confidence; but that she rather shrunk from the

proof of it, which he offered to give; yet she wished to know about his college friend, and also the nature of the change which had taken place in his own mind. "But do not, my dear friend," she wrote, "gratify my curiosity, if doing so can recal one painful circumstance."

CHAPTER XI.

CATHARINE'S life, for the first fortnight after Dunallan's departure, was wholly devoted to those pursuits she had begun at his request ; and every day, as her information increased, and her conversations with Mrs. Oswald made her more acquainted with the opinions and sentiments considered, by that lady and Dunallan, necessary to constitute the character of a real Christian, she became more convinced that they were right. To Mrs. Oswald she confided every difficulty and doubt of her own mind ; while, according to Dunallan's wish, she persevered in making herself acquainted with what he esteemed the Christian system ; and in Mrs. Oswald she found the tenderness of a mother united to the sincerity of a friend, equally capable from natural talent, information, and experience, to assist and enlighten her young, but strong and candid mind. Catharine felt Dunallan's absence ; she also thought with pain of the solitary situation of her father, yet she was now so constantly occupied, and

pleased, and interested, that she dreaded any interruption to her new pursuits, and felt quite annoyed on being informed, one forenoon, on her return from visiting her school, that a lady had just arrived. Catharine did not inquire who the lady was, but hurrying to her room, gave way to the impatience of the moment. Some of our troublesome country neighbours at last, thought she; what a plague! she rung for Martin.

“What lady is here, Martin?”

“Mrs. Williams, Ma’am.”

“Mrs. Williams! Ah, I rejoice to hear it.”

“She is indeed a very sweet looking-lady, Ma’am. Mrs. Oswald sent for me to ask where you were, Ma’am. She wished me to go for you, but Mrs. Williams would not suffer you to be interrupted.”

Catharine felt herself half afraid, yet longed to see this Mrs. Williams, so much esteemed by Dunallan. An apprehension of inferiority was however still painful to Catharine; and though she struggled against this proud feeling, yet her raised head, and half cold expression, as she entered the room where Mrs. Williams was, gave an air of formal politeness to her address, rather than the real pleasure she felt at meeting her. Mrs. Williams’s manner was very mild, and perfectly easy.

“ We have been talking of you, my dear Catharine,” said Mrs. Oswald.

Catharine blushed. “ Then I regret having interrupted your conversation,” replied she, “ for I am very sensible of the advantage of a favourable impression having been given before acquaintance commences.”

“ And are you so certain, Catharine, of my giving a favourable impression of you ?”

“ I believe so.”

Mrs. Williams smiled, but said nothing. There was something in her appearance that at once excited both respect and interest. She was handsome, as far as a graceful figure, very fine eyes, and a charming smile, could make one so ; but an air of thoughtfulness, and the very smile, which, engaging as it was, seemed more from politeness than feeling, conveyed an idea of superiority to trifles, and to trifling compliments, which was the rather pleasing, because the whole turn of her expressive countenance bore the same elevated character. “ Mrs. Oswald has told me how you were employed, Mrs. Dunallan,” said she ; “ and that you feel yourself interested in such occupations.”

“ I do indeed ; and I hope I shall continue to feel myself so.”

“ Oh no ! do not expect that,” replied Mrs. Williams ; “ you must prepare yourself for dis-

appointment, that when you meet with it you may not be disgusted, and tempted to give up all your useful employments. I have often been on the verge of doing so."

"I might very easily be tempted to do so," replied Catharine; "for I am not very patient; but I did not undertake these occupations from any expectation of pleasure or amusement, or even interest. Mr. Dunallan taught me to regard them as a duty, and I still expect I shall have to struggle with my natural aversion to the restraint of regular employment: hitherto, however, I have found myself more interested than I imagined I should be, more, indeed, than I ever was before in any pursuit; because the end at which I wish to aim is so much nobler."

"True," replied Mrs. Williams, looking much pleased; "but still I cannot help fearing you may find many things both disappointing and provoking in your endeavours to improve your people; the parents of the children, even, are such impediments to their improvement, that at times one feels quite discouraged."

"Mrs. Oswald had prepared me so well to expect that," said Catharine, "that I have been surprised at my success. I have made many new rules, to every one of which the parents of my children have acceded without any difficulty."

“ Really,” said Mrs. Williams, smiling, “ you must have some secret way of charming them to do your pleasure.”

Catharine described all she had done in the most animated language ; and so deeply was she occupied in conversing on such subjects, that time passed away unobserved. Mrs. Oswald and Mrs. Williams became equally interested, and when, after a very long conversation, the latter rose to take leave, Catharine found she still had so much to inquire about, and to say, that she earnestly and affectionately pressed her to remain until the next day. Mrs. Williams, who, Catharine felt, returned the interest she excited, was easily persuaded to comply with a request urged so evidently from the heart.

Catharine found Mrs. Williams’s society singularly pleasing. She seemed to guess what subjects would be most interesting, and continued to turn the conversation constantly to them, while her evident feeling of interest, and her confiding manner to Catharine, completely succeeded in gaining her confidence. Mrs. Williams talked of Dunallan, and of his singular opinions, which she avowed were also her own. She spoke of him with more than esteem, with the deepest gratitude, and explained its cause. He had been the friend of her husband, and had watched him

in his last illness with the tenderness of a brother; he had been the means of making his death-bed a scene of peace and triumph. He had been her own friend, when left a widow and wretched. He was the guardian of her children, and such a guardian!

Catharine listened with delight to the praises of Dunallan, and Mrs. Williams, though unable from emotion at times to proceed, seemed determined to make her acquainted with her husband's and her own obligations to him, and with that unwearied and tenderly benevolent part of his character which her misfortunes had brought to her knowledge. Catharine wept with her, and Mrs. Williams's countenance brightened through her tears, when she saw the impression her story had made.

Next morning Mrs. Williams took leave, after receiving the willing promise of an early visit from Catharine.

Many of the neighbouring families had now called at Arnmore; but though Catharine saw that they easily would have been prevailed on to lengthen their visits, none of them except Mrs. Williams had so far interested or pleased her as to inspire a wish that they should.

One evening a party arrived whom Catharine was not a little surprised to see. Mrs. St. Clair

and her son. She could not conceive why the latter should choose so soon to visit her after what had passed, and particularly in Dunallan's absence. She felt displeased, and received him with extreme coldness. Mrs. St. Clair she attempted to meet as an old friend, but did not succeed; and she often wished, as the evening passed heavily on, that she had invited some of her morning visitors to remain.

St. Clair attempted to appear cheerful. He told Catharine that he was just going abroad, and that he could not prevail on himself to leave the country, perhaps for years, without once again seeing one of his earliest friends. Catharine only bowed. An angry glow crossed St. Clair's brow, but he said nothing. Catharine had known him from her childhood, however, and was well acquainted with the expression of his countenance. She soon perceived that he was narrowly scanning hers, and was aware that he had now come to discover whether she was as unhappy as she knew his late disappointment from her made him wish her to be. His mother, she had no doubt, partook of her son's feelings.

Catharine expected a letter from Dunallan this evening; she almost wished it might not arrive; and she shrunk, as the hour of prayers approached, from the idea of the ridicule which her care

of her servants would excite in the minds of Mrs. St. Clair and her son. The usual post hour, however, passed, and no letter arrived from Dunallan. Catharine felt relieved, but disappointed; and her endeavours to converse cheerfully with her guests, which had hitherto succeeded only in part, now gave place to absent thoughtfulness. Mrs. Oswald attempted to supply her place, but all she said was received with such uncivil coldness, that, after several good-natured but fruitless endeavours to overcome the prejudice and dislike with which Mrs. St. Clair seemed to regard her, she gave up the attempt, and turned to Catharine.

“ Our messenger has probably been detained to-night, my dear,” said she, observing the sadness which now began to steal over the expressive countenance of her young friend; “ you know he often is. We shall have our letters to-morrow morning.”

“ I only *hoped* for letters, I did not quite *expect* them to-night, my dear madam,” answered Catharine, smiling sweetly in reply to the tenderly affectionate manner of Mrs. Oswald’s address, so unlike that of her proud and gloomy guests. A pause in the conversation ensued. St. Clair looked earnestly at Catharine, as if to read in

her countenance from whence she expected those longed for letters.

“ I hear your friend Elizabeth is just going to be married to one of the young Melvilles,” said Mrs. St. Clair. “ I suppose you hear frequently from her on the eve of such an event.”

“ Very frequently,” replied Catharine; but she did not pursue this subject, for Mrs. St. Clair had always seemed to dislike Elizabeth.

Another pause followed, and of such long continuance, that Catharine at last, scarcely knowing what she said, asked St. Clair if he had been acquainted with Mr. Walderford at college?

“ I was,” replied he; “ he was then supposed to possess very superior talents, and great expectations were formed respecting him, until he chose to adopt a set of enthusiastic notions, which now, I believe, I must not mention with disrespect in your presence, Catharine—Mrs. Dunallan, I mean: pardon me.” He did seem to revolt at the new appellation. “ I must confess, however,” continued he, “ that I have rather avoided Walderford since he became so singular.”

“ Did you value his acquaintance before that time?” asked Catharine.

“ Extremely; every one did. He had the clearest head of any young man at the university, and the quickest penetration into character, with

the most kind and affectionate of hearts, joined to an uncommon share of humour and talent for society, notwithstanding his natural reserve. Every one loved and respected him. Poor Walderford!" continued St. Clair, "it was most unlike his knowledge of mankind, and his usual good sense, to make known his adoption of such opinions; he might at least have confined them to his own breast."

"But *can* such opinions be concealed, my dear Sir?" asked Mrs. Oswald in her quick way.

"Why not Madam? are we not forced at times to confine far more powerful——" St. Clair hesitated, "we must learn to—— I know men who have singular opinions on many subjects," continued he, recovering himself, "who never talk of them but in confidence. I have notions myself on that very subject, religion, which are perhaps quite as singular, though very different from Walderford's; but why shock people by constantly avowing our heresies from common opinion? I believe," continued St. Clair, "every man who thinks at all must form some opinion on that subject; but as those opinions are of importance only to himself, I think he is mad if he exposes himself to universal ridicule and contempt, by attaching such importance to a set of

dogmas, and acting upon them with the blind zeal and self-satisfaction which seems to inspire poor Walderford."

"But what is there in those opinions, which really ought to shock any one?" asked Catharine. "You said, Mr. St. Clair, that to me you must not now mention them with disrespect; I suppose from their similarity to those ascribed to Mr. Dunallan. I confess it does pain me to hear them mentioned with disrespect; and allow me to add, that I am sure, if you were really acquainted with those opinions, and, still more, with their effects on those who adopt them, you would describe them in gentler terms."

"They are opinions very shocking to common sense at least," said Mrs. St. Clair. "Mr. Walderford's opinions, I mean."

"I beg pardon, said young St. Clair, "for having used such harsh expressions. I have little knowledge of Mr. Dunallan's notions on any subject; but the opinions I mean, though they are gaining ground in society, or, at least, are acquiring an ascendancy over a certain class of minds, shrink from the examinations of reason and philosophy."

"I believe," said Mrs. Oswald mildly, "that it is an allowed maxim amongst philosophers, that the supporters of any system ought to be permit-

ted to state their own opinions. Now, in this case, you must allow me at least to correct your statement, Mr. St. Clair. The advocates for the opinions you have mentioned do not shrink from the tribunals of reason and philosophy, from a dread of their award; but they say that reason or philosophy are of no value until they are enlightened by that revelation which declares the natural reason and wisdom of man to be foolishness, and his philosophy vanity. The supporters of those opinions therefore regard reason, when it discards revelation as its guide, as an *ignis fatuus*, a light that leads astray; and philosophy as an unmeaning, though imposing word."

"You are right, Madam," replied St. Clair warmly, "I did state the case unfairly; those opinions do set reason and philosophy at defiance; and the weakest blockhead who adopts them, immediately thinks himself superior to, and fitted to instruct the wisest of his fellow men. This is one of the many disgusting features of the system," added St. Clair, rising abruptly and walking towards a window, desiring apparently to put an end to the subject.

"You must allow me to say one word," replied Mrs. Oswald. "The defect you mention cannot, with a shadow of fairness, be ascribed to

the system, because its very character and essence is humility."

St. Clair remained silent, and another pause in the conversation followed. The evening was beautiful; and, though late, Catharine proposed walking.

"We have many charming walks here," said she, turning to St. Clair, (who remained at the window,) and directing her eyes to the scenery below.

He looked in the same direction for a moment, then turned away. He seemed to hate its beauty.

"You used to admire this part of the day, and like to walk at sunset, Mr. St. Clair," said Catharine, in a voice less cold than that in which she had hitherto addressed him.

He appeared softened for a moment, then said, turning gloomily away, "I used to like and admire many things which I must not now trust myself to look at. Sunset is one."

Catharine felt his meaning, and reproached herself for having said any thing to produce such a reply. She turned to Mrs. St. Clair, and again resumed her endeavours to find some topic of conversation that might excite her interest; but her attempts for some time were unsuccessful; the subjects at least on which Catharine chose to

converse had no interest for Mrs. St. Clair, and those into which she would eagerly have entered were studiously avoided by Catharine. At last she recollected that Mrs. St. Clair was engaged in superintending the erection of a magnificent mansion at her beautiful isle, and she easily succeeded in leading her to talk of it. Mrs. Oswald, who never was idle, when she saw that young St. Clair determined to remain silent, employed herself busily at her work. St. Clair stood with his back to the window, and his eyes either fixed in deep thought on the carpet, or raised to Catharine, with an expression that betrayed the subject of his contemplations. He looked miserable, and his uneasiness seemed to increase the longer he indulged in thought.

Catharine continued to listen to Mrs. St. Clair, and, at her request, began to sketch the plan of a gothic window for the hall of her new house.

“Oh! that is quite beautiful,” exclaimed Mrs. St. Clair, when she had finished it. “Look, Arthur, is not this much more perfect than any of those in our plans? but you have lost all interest in the house now,” said she reproachfully, as he slowly advanced from the window, “you are most unaccountably changeable, Arthur. Is it not beautiful?”

“ Beautiful, indeed ! Shall I preserve the sketch for you, Madam ? ”

A servant at this moment appeared. Catharine knew it was to announce the hour of prayers. Mrs. Oswald said, “ very well, John ; ” and the servant left the room.

“ Do fix the sketch, Mr. St. Clair,” said Catharine, placing drawing materials before him. “ I must leave you for a short time, Madam,” added she, turning to Mrs. St. Clair, and a good deal embarrassed. But meeting Mrs. Oswald’s look of anxious concern, and recollecting the contempt with which she had treated the fears of that good lady, lest she should be deterred from duty by the dread of ridicule, she recovered her composure, and said, in a calm tone of voice, “ Mr. Dunallan thinks it proper that his servants should have the scriptures read to them daily, and, in his absence, I have undertaken, directed by Mrs. Oswald, to continue this custom.”

Mrs. St. Clair and her son looked at each other. “ Do you not admit your friends to the benefit of your instructions ? ” asked Mrs. St. Clair.

“ I do not pretend to instruct,” replied Catharine, mildly ; “ but Mrs. Oswald has convinced me that the attempt at informing our servants is a duty. I merely read a portion of scripture,

and a short explanation; and as I *am* convinced of its being a duty, I must not be deterred by ridicule from performing it."

"No one certainly could be so cruel as to ridicule any thing defended so ——" St. Clair proceeded thus far, and then stopt. "Will you not admit us?" asked he.

"You must excuse me," replied Catharine, "were Mr. Dunallan at home, I should entreat you to join us."

St. Clair turned away in displeasure. When Mrs. Oswald and Catharine returned, they found Mrs. St. Clair and her son looking gloomier than before. There was a sweet calmness and elevation in the expression of Catharine's countenance, however, and a dignified and cheerful composure in Mrs. Oswald's, which commanded their respect; and by degrees they were restored to an apparently happier state of feeling.

Catharine felt greatly relieved, when Mrs. St. Clair declared her intention of going next day. She would have concealed her satisfaction, but saw by the angry expression of St. Clair's countenance that he had perceived it. She felt extremely displeased, however, at the freedom with which he continued to watch her every word and look; and the cold calmness of her eye when she

addressed him, seemed to recal to him the remembrance of her situation.

Next morning at breakfast, a very large packet was brought to Catharine; she observed the post-mark ———, and became very pale. St. Clair seemed to understand the cause, and it darkened his brow.

“No wonder such letters should be longed for,” said he, contemptuously, but bitterly, and looking at its size.

“Certainly not,” replied she, “when the contents too are always even more interesting than they are expected to be.”

St. Clair’s eye flashed; but for a moment he was silent, then said with forced calmness, “You have convinced me at last, Madam, that your sex possesses one virtue, which I have hitherto been such an infidel as to doubt; that of becoming moulded into new habits, and new feelings, and new affections, with a facility almost incomprehensible, and in proportion,” added he, sarcastically, “to the dislike and contempt with which they formerly viewed those habits, and those objects which they afterwards value.”

“You ought rather, from my experience, to be convinced of an unhappy defect in my sex,” replied Catharine, “that of allowing prejudice to take such complete possession of the mind, that

nothing less than a superiority in every thing, almost more than human, can overcome it."

St. Clair bit his lip. Catharine had looked calmly and fixedly at him while she spoke, and the effect of what she had said on the expression of his countenance almost frightened her; but his reflection on Dunallan had roused her spirit, and she now longed for an opportunity of honouring him in the presense of those contemptuous St. Clairs.

"Pray, read your letter, Madam," said Mrs. St. Clair. "I beg we may not for a moment prevent your enjoying that pleasure."

Catharine only bowed, and then broke the seal. She looked at the date, then at the conclusion, but that was too kind to be read in such company; tears filled her eyes, tears that she saw were observed, but she cared not. She folded up her letter, and laid it by her, and then attempted to converse with Mrs. St. Clair; but her thoughts wandered to her letter, and it was with great pleasure she heard Mrs. St. Clair's carriage announced, and saw her soon after depart with her haughty and disappointed son.

Catharine embraced Mrs. Oswald with unusual tenderness; "you have seen a specimen of my friends, my dearest Madam," said she, "and

I have had many such. You see how sincerely they wish for my happiness.”

“But you must have some excuse for this lady, my dear,” replied Mrs. Oswald, “I see how matters stand; you have disappointed her dearest hopes and favourite plans, and her son’s also. Ah! my dear Catharine, you may be very thankful that the singularly pleasing exterior of that young man did not engage your youthful affections; he could not have made you happy. But adieu for a little, my love; I see you are impatient to read your letter.”

Catharine shut herself up in her room, and was soon completely absorbed. Dunallan’s letter consisted of many sheets closely written.

“Each succeeding letter from you, my dearest Catharine, confirms me in the idea I had formed of your character, and strengthens the hope that I shall soon see you become all I could wish. You are right, my sweet friend, in your supposition, that kindly as I express my interest in you, and kindly—tenderly as I feel for you, there is yet a want, a defect in your character which I have never clearly expressed. I will tell you my reason, because, until I received your last letter, I did not suppose you would have understood my meaning. I see you look surprised; but, my dear Catharine, had I said to you the week be-

fore we left Dunallan Castle, that you were ignorant of the true nature of religion, would you not have repelled the charge, and regarded me as a gloomy bigoted enthusiast, as your friends did? I would not now say this of you, my dearest Catharine, though my opinion was not greatly changed, until I received your last (to me precious) letter, which proves to me that you begin to feel that humbling sense of your natural disrelish of what true religion requires, which I think must be felt before we can at all appreciate the Christian system. You have discovered the difference between the religion of the imagination, and that of the heart and understanding. You are convinced that the former is of no value, and that the last is absolutely necessary; but your understanding feels its weakness in attempting to comprehend the doctrines, and your heart its opposition to the strict and spiritual precepts of the New Testament—and this pains you. What will you think of my affection for you, my Catharine, when I say, that I hope this pain may increase? I wish I could bear it for you, but that is impossible. If by this means you are to be brought into the fold, the Shepherd of the flock alone can carry on his own process in your mind. Watch its progress, my dear Catharine, and seek to know more of his character who has your heart

in his hand. Study his gracious promises to the young, and to all who really wish to devote themselves to his service. Study his precepts, and attempt to perform all he demands. You will every moment feel your inability, and thus your humble opinion of yourself will increase: the more it does so, the more are you fitted to value that religion, which is suited to those only who feel truly, experimentally, that in themselves they are lost. Fear not to tread this lowly path, my dear Catharine, for it leads to the purest, the most exalted happiness; because it leads us to seek it from Him who is its source, and whom an hopeless sense of our natural unfitness to love and serve as he demands, leads us to regard as our only Saviour, our strength, our light, our peace, our all. But I say too much—now you will not understand me. Oh! that you did, my beloved Catharine.

“You wish to know, my dear Catharine, what led me to adopt the principles which now influence me. You wish also to know more of my college friend, in whom my aunt has greatly interested you; ‘but not,’ you sweetly add, ‘if recalling any thing that is past would give me pain.’ It cannot pain me to recal the idea of him: it is, indeed, seldom long absent from my thoughts, and it would add to my happiness, my dear

Catharine, if I could interest you in the memory of the being on earth whom I have loved most, and have been most indebted to. You shrink, most naturally shrink, from the knowledge of that miserable course of sin, which marked a part, thank heaven, a short part of my youth; but you may trust me. I am not one of those who imagine a young and inexperienced mind can in any way be benefited by becoming acquainted with the secrets of wickedness; and to you, my dearest Catharine! you, of whose delicacy I consider myself the guardian! But no more of this—forgive even so much. What I wish is this—to convince you of the utter incapacity of the human heart to be truly moral. Temptations may differ, and lead to different results, but none can ever comprehend what pure morality is without aid from heaven, without a revelation, and the power to understand it. I am willing to give you myself as an example of this incapacity, not because I think I was better disposed than others, but because I am better acquainted with what has passed in my own heart; and because I began life with an high aim, and an high opinion of man's moral capacity. I do feel half ashamed, however, to commence my own historian, and almost shrink from the fulfilment of my promise; but I cannot otherwise make you

acquainted with my friend, or describe the power of his mind over mine, or the change of my own. Dear Catharine, I wish I could give you an idea of the interest I feel in your real happiness while I write,—in your soul's happiness, that immortal soul, which has been placed by heaven in some degree in my charge, and which must be prepared during the short period of life, for an existence that shall never end ! But no more of this, lest I should disgust instead of convincing you.

“ I believe, my dear Catharine, you know that I was peculiarly happy in a mother. During her life, as even *I* then knew, my education was a continual cause of difference of opinion between her and my father ; yet so gently did she differ from him, and on every other thing she was so sweetly yielding, that, except on one point, she generally directed all my concerns. That one point was religion. My mother's opinions on that subject were disagreeable to my father in the extreme, and he was determined that I should not imbibe them. My mother would have preferred an home education during early youth : my father considered a large school most suited to develop and strengthen the character of a boy. As my home did not promise those virtuous examples which are the chief advantage of a private education, my mother at last consented to part

with me, on my father's yielding to her wish, that I might be placed where there were only a small number of boys. My father, however, chose my tutor; and the gentleman on whom he fixed had every requisite excepting the one most valued by my mother. He was a man of superior talents; a deep and elegant scholar, with a taste singularly refined and cultivated; he had also lived much in the world, and his manners were extremely polished. My companions in this gentleman's house were a limited number of boys, sons of some of the first families in the country. With such a tutor, who devoted himself to the improvement of his pupils, and with a natural inclination for those pursuits most valued by him, my progress was so rapid as very soon to gain me a high place in his favour. It was also my nature, to desire ardently to be loved by those around me, and I easily gained the affections of my young companions. When I visited home I was caressed by every one. My father, I perceived, regarded me as his pride and hope. My mother's affection for me seemed increased by my absence from home. She attempted, however, with the most solicitous tenderness, to convince me that no mental acquirements, no personal accomplishments, no degree of the esteem, or love or admiration of others, were of any value

without religion. She said, they were snares to foster pride and delude the soul. I listened to her, because I loved, and could not give her pain; but my tutor was a Deist, and I had learned from him to consider all systems of religion, in short, all religion excepting that of nature, as priestcraft and deception, suited only to trammel weak and ignorant minds. I remained with my tutor till I went to college. You can hardly, my dear Catharine, conceive a being more ignorant of the world, and human nature as it really is, than I then was. My companions and myself, while with our tutor, lived almost apart from all other society; and his kindness, a pleasant method of conveying instruction, joined to the elevated tone of morality, and high sense of honour which he inculcated, led us to love and esteem him so warmly, that even during our visits at home, which at his request were very short, we still acted as if under his eye. Several of us went at the same time to college, our heads filled with learning, and our hearts glowing with admiration of the characters of antiquity—their patriotism, their eloquence, and, I may add, their pride; and turning with contempt from all the humbler virtues—virtues which Christianity in its precepts, and the common realities of life, teach us to regard as most valuable. At this time I lost my mother, and her

death first taught me the insufficiency of the theories of philosophy to overcome, or even to soften real grief. But time did what they could not do; and the affectionate cares of my young friends drew me again into those studies and pursuits for which I had lost all relish. My ambition to excel returned. I again laboured for distinction, and soon succeeded in obtaining a reputation almost equal to my desires. My father had early taught me to regard the senate of my country as the proper place for the employment of my talents and acquirements; and, above all, where I might distinguish myself most conspicuously. I soon found that he was right. All the young men of family at college who were remarkable for talent, were taught to prepare for the same destination. Eloquence became one of my favourite pursuits. I studied all its masters with ardent attention, and cultivated every exterior grace. I also, with the permission of my superiors, prevailed on some of my numerous friends at college to meet together, for the purpose of improving and exhibiting our powers of elocution; and this meeting soon became the favourite recreation of all the young men most distinguished for talent at the university. We invited all our college friends who chose to attend, and to give their opinions on the subjects in debate.

“ One evening as I declaimed on a favourite subject, and was listened to with eager attention and frequent bursts of applause, I remarked one striking and unknown countenance opposite to me, which did not join in the general expression of approbation. There was something in this countenance which attracted me so forcibly, that my eyes continually returned to it; but I finished my declamation, and returned to my seat amidst thunders of applause, without having received one mark of admiration from him. His eye, however, followed me, and he half rose as if to speak, but another young man got up, and he resumed his seat. I immediately called on the stranger, as I had seen him half up before the other rose; but he seemed to wish to decline speaking, until called on by half the assembly. A blush glowed for a moment on his fine but pale countenance, and for the few first words he hesitated; but, soon recovering himself, his low and harmonious voice, and beautiful language, instantly arrested every one’s attention; and then the strikingly clear, though simple arguments, by which he proved that all I had said was mere sophistry, extorted applause even from those who were so warmly attached to me, that they would willingly have shared the disgrace of my defeat in argument. The stranger’s speech was short,

and he retired to his seat, apparently wishing to conceal himself from the many inquiring eyes which were fixed upon him. My friends looked at me, expecting that I should reply; but I felt that I could not, and openly avowed my inability, and the extreme admiration with which the overpowering talents and eloquence of the last speaker had filled me. This avowal was followed by the applauses of my friends, and now also by those of my interesting opponent, who, by a feeling and beautifully expressed compliment to my *noble* ingenuousness, as he called it, and also to my talents, which he said could only fail when they undertook the defence of so bad a cause, in some degree restored me to my own good opinion. The subject of discussion had been one on which I had often before declaimed, and enjoyed the consciousness of my powers of eloquence, whilst I had, almost at will, excited the deepest emotions in the young and ardent spirits who listened to me. I heard no more that evening. Many attempts were made to reply to the stranger, all equally unsuccessful; and after listening for some time, he took advantage of a dispute about precedence, and retired. No one near me could give me any information respecting him; he seemed quite unknown even by name. I had sought his acquaintance by my looks; but though

I thought that he regarded me with complacency when our eyes met, he seemed rather to avoid looking at me; and I felt hurt even at this supposed rejection of my advances. When he retired, however, I no longer found any interest in what past. When the assembly dispersed, I followed a young man with whom alone I had seen the stranger converse, and learned that his name was Churchill; that he was the son of a clergyman, and was himself studying for the same profession, which induced him to cultivate every means of improving his talent for public speaking. I learned, also, that it was his choice, from the limited income of his family, and still more from the singularity of his own religious opinions, to live as retiredly as possible. I expressed myself so warmly in his praise, that Churchill's friend asked if I wished for his acquaintance.

“ ‘I have courted him unsuccessfully with my eyes,’ replied I, laughing. ‘I should like extremely to be acquainted with him, however, if he has no objection.’

“ Next day I met Churchill's friend, but he said nothing to me on the subject of the preceding evening's conversation.

“ ‘I perceive,’ said I to him, ‘that your friend has declined my acquaintance.’

“He made some awkward apology; and I cannot describe to you, my dear Catharine, how much my pride was hurt by this refusal of my offered regard. I determined, however, that at least I should not deserve his contempt. I studied the subject on which we were the next evening to debate with the deepest attention. On that evening my eye sought for him whenever I entered the hall. He was there, and I thought looked away rather confused when our eyes met. After several speeches Churchill rose, and again drew forth the most unbounded applause; yet when I followed him on this night, and on the opposite side of the question, the general voice seemed to be with me. I avoided looking at Churchill; but as we left the hall, we came together to a narrow door-way. I stood back to let him pass. He bowed: ‘Of courtesy, not of right,’ said he, as he passed.

“‘I feel it of right, in every way,’ replied I. He only smiled, shook his head, and bowed again.

“‘Are you acquainted with Mr. Churchill?’ asked a young man who walked with me towards my apartments.

“‘No,’ replied I; ‘he does not wish for my acquaintance.’

“ ‘Not wish for it!’ exclaimed my young companion; ‘he surely has not declined it,’ added he, ‘if you wish for his.’

“ ‘I certainly wish for his,’ replied I, ‘ardently wish for it; but he does not feel on this subject as you do. I believe he does not think my acquaintance worth seeking.’

“ ‘Some one put his arm within mine. It was dark, and knowing that many of my friends walked near me, I was not surprised.

“ ‘Will you accept of the acquaintance of a listener?’ said the voice of Churchill.

“ ‘I was delighted. ‘I will grasp at his acquaintance on any terms,’ replied I, warmly shaking his hand, which he as warmly returned.

“ ‘I have broken through a resolution,’ said Churchill, ‘for the very reason, I believe, which ought to have determined me to keep it.’

“ ‘What was your resolution?’

“ ‘Not to get acquainted with you.’

“ ‘With me! With our set of young men, I suppose you mean.’

“ ‘No, Mr. Dunallan, with yourself.’

“ ‘And why so, Mr. Churchill?’

“ ‘Ah, that is a long story. I shall tell it you another time.’

“ ‘Come and sup with me now.’

“ ‘ I never sup out; but I shall go with you for half an hour.’

“ When we were alone, I asked his reason for wishing so particularly to avoid my acquaintance.

“ ‘ Because,’ replied he, ‘ I know the superiority of your talents, and the influence you acquire over those with whom you associate, by the union of those talents with your temper and powers of pleasing. I dreaded you, Dunallan.’

“ ‘ But why, Churchill? I am not conscious of having used my influence, whatever it is, to lead any one astray.’

“ ‘ I am certain you never *intentionally* have,’ replied he, ‘ yet you do lead astray; and I feel that you would soon acquire an unaccountable power over me also, should my judgment yield to my affections. I do not know if I am right,’ added he, ‘ but the selfish, cautious dread of receiving injury from you has given place to the ardent, though, perhaps, rash desire of attempting to rescue you from the influence of what I am convinced are very dangerous opinions.’

“ I urged him to explain himself.

“ ‘ Forgive me,’ replied he, ‘ if I remind you of the opinions you so eloquently advanced, and which were so rapturously received and imbibed

by those who listened to you on the first evening we met.'

" 'And which you, with such superior talent refuted,' replied I.

" 'My fate this evening,' replied Churchill, 'has shown whose talents are most superior. It was the goodness of my cause alone which gave me an advantage on that evening; and believe me, Dunallan, whenever you attempt to argue in favour of human virtue, and its value, and the 'vast conquests of human reason,' you will find that very inferior abilities, with some knowledge of the human heart, will be able to refute all you say. Why Dunallan,' continued he, 'are you such an enemy to revelation?'

" 'Revelation !' repeated I with disgust, 'I am an enemy to every thing that debases the human mind. There are parts of what you call revelation which I admire as much as you can do; but I cannot—I have not tried, to believe what is contrary to reason, to probability, to common sense. Surely, Churchill, you cannot pretend to say that you have succeeded in subjecting that fine mind of yours to the belief, or to the supposition that the belief is necessary, of all the contradictions—all the absurd——'

" 'Stop, Dunallan,' interrupted Churchill,

‘do not add to your future regret, by the abuse of that which I fervently hope may one day be to you, as it now is to me, I solemnly declare, in as far as a weak and perverted, though proud and cavilling nature will suffer it to be,—the test by which I try every principle, every word, every action, every thought; the light and guide of my soul; the foundation of all my hopes; and the support and consolation of my heart.’

“I shall never forget, my dear Catharine, the tone of voice, and the elevated expression of countenance which accompanied these words. I can understand now from whence they proceeded; I could not then; and when Churchill took leave, I felt bewildered in forming my judgment of his character. My conclusion, however, was, that early education had clouded his noble faculties, and now led him to view as dangerous whatever was contrary to prejudices which, from their connexion with lofty and mysterious subjects, were calculated to engage a mind, such as I supposed his to be; yet his dread of the influence of others proved to me that he felt the weakness of the ground on which he stood. I therefore determined to avoid combating those prejudices, which seemed to have their hold as much on his heart as on his imagination, but to attempt to lead him gradually to the beautiful, and I then

thought irresistible, theories which filled my own mind. I soon found, however, that it was impossible to avoid entering into argument with Churchill respecting his opinions, because they in some degree, pervaded every subject on which he conversed. In spite of this I became every day more attached to him. I greatly disliked his religious sentiments, however, and laboured, both when with him, and when absent from him, to find arguments to overturn a system which seemed to unfit him for the world. I was perfectly sincere then, in thinking my own system the right one, and in every thing but in complying with Churchill's desire to examine his opinions; for some of them appeared to me so absurd and unreasonable that I had not patience to hear him argue in their defence. I introduced the subject into our public debates; as I expected, all at first joined me; but Churchill stood firm though alone. In a short time, however, to my grief and dismay, the friend at college whom I loved and esteemed next to Churchill adopted all his notions. This friend, my dear Catharine, was Walderford. His talents, particularly his powers of reasoning, had been esteemed by us all as very superior. His adoption of Churchill's opinions made a great sensation amongst us, and even I then attempted to comprehend their sys-

tem, and, if possible, to reconcile it to reason; but in vain. I told Walderford so. He only smiled, and assured me that, while I worshipped human reason, there was no room in my heart for the true God. I asked him, in the bitterness of sarcasm, ‘If the Being he worshipped was the God of fools only?’

“ ‘Even so,’ replied he, with perfect mildness, though he was naturally of a very warm temper, ‘even so, Dunallan; his true worshippers must become fools in their own eyes, and perhaps in the eyes of others; they must lay aside the pride of reason, and their trust in its power, and subject their understandings to the teaching of Him who is the only source of truth.’

“I shall not repeat our many arguments, my dear Catharine; I shall only give you an idea of the systems we each maintained. Mine was this: That the human soul is, when it enters life, perfectly innocent, and perfectly pure, possessed of the germ of all those powers, in different degrees, which are afterwards to be devoted to good, or evil, according to the will of the possessor, biased, of course, by circumstances, example, or education. That the human will is perfectly free, and able to choose the path it may pursue; and that human virtue consists in preferring what is good, and is great in proportion to the obstacles

it overcomes in making this choice. That the Supreme Being will at last reward those with everlasting happiness who attain, at least, to a greater degree of virtue than vice: as to what should become of those who did not, I had formed no opinion; for, respecting the declarations of Scripture on that point, I was, to say the least, completely sceptical. The founder of the Christian religion I regarded as — But indeed, dear Catharine, I will not risk the possibility of misleading your mind by entering into the thoughts I then presumptuously indulged on this most sacred subject. Suffice it to say, that, as a small part only of the doctrines of Christianity can be comprehended by the natural human understanding, to that part only I assented. I shall not mention the many absurd and irreverent speculations which were entertained on this subject by my companions and myself. The morality of the New Testament I greatly admired, though I thought many parts of it unfit for real life.

Churchill's opinions will perhaps appear to you, as they then did to me, inconsistent with reason, and dishonourable to the Divine Being. He believed that a strong bias to evil was inherent in human nature, and an incapacity to choose what is good. He argued from Scripture, and from facts. I argued against both, in defence of

man's natural innocence. He considered human reason as utterly incapable of discovering truth with regard to the relation subsisting between us and our Creator, and equally incapable of judging of what was suitable for that Creator to require of his creatures. That a revelation to inform us of this was absolutely necessary; and that, when such a revelation was offered, and when we had investigated the truth of its claims to inspiration, with fairness, and upon proper principles, and found the proofs so complete as to convince our reason, which ought to judge here, we had only then to subject every power of our souls to the implicit reception of every word of this revelation; and when we could not comprehend, we ought to pray humbly, and believing firmly in its promises, for greater degrees of light. And in this spirit alone, he said, could we understand the meaning of Scripture; and that until we, in some degree, comprehended revelation, and felt its influence on our belief, our affections, and our conduct, our minds were ignorant of what real truth was, and in utter darkness;—we neither know ourselves, nor our present abject state, nor the high destination which we despised, nor the character of the Judge of the universe, nor, in a word, any thing.

.. These opinions were revolting, and disgust-

ing to me in the extreme ; but my arguments had no influence with either Walderford or Churchill, and as we could not agree, we resolved to avoid the subject, with this agreement, that our after-lives should be the test of our principles. I observed Churchill, when we made this agreement, as he turned from me, raise his eyes to heaven, as if imploring power to prove the truth of his principles.

“ My natural powers against your prayers, Churchill,” said I, in my usual tone of ridicule.

He smiled, but faintly, and a momentary paleness passed over his countenance.

“ You frighten me, Dunallan,” replied he. “ If you knew the goodness which you thus ‘ resist !’—he stopt, and only added, “ You shall not be without those prayers you so ignorantly despise.”

After this we seldom mentioned the subject ; and for some months, I believe, I enjoyed as uninterrupted happiness as any rational being, in my then state of ignorance of the real source of enjoyment, could, and I can understand the feelings of those who, disgusted with a chilling, and corrupting, and jarring world, and having no knowledge of happiness independent of what that world can give, look back on the time spent at

college as the happiest of their lives. Walderford, Churchill, and I, were seldom asunder, and our affection daily increased. They both rather shunned the subject of religion, but declared their belief that I should one day think as they did. I believed them sincere, and by turns pitied and envied their delusions, particularly Churchill's, who appeared to derive a happiness from his religion which astonished me; he seemed to bring it into every thing. We were all enthusiastic admirers of nature; but he seemed to enjoy a pleasure so exquisite in beholding its beauties, that he had no language in which to express his feelings; or rather, he seemed to enjoy an internal delight, the source of which I did not comprehend; for to me then, beautiful as nature appeared, its beauty made me sad. The smallest flower seemed a source of the sweetest pleasure to Churchill. "How beautiful is *His* penciling?" he would exclaim, and then seemed to regard it with a glow of rapture. Walderford seemed to understand him, but did not appear so happy.

"Ah, Walderford!" said I once to him, "the disciple cannot command the sweet delusions of the master; your new religion has not added to your happiness."

“ I confess, replied he, “ I am not yet so happy as Churchill. All his difficulties are nearly overcome. I am still combating with mine, and most of all with my cherished pride of reason; but, Dunallan, you have no cause to doubt my word, and I declare to you before heaven, that, from what even *I* know and feel of the influence of true religion, the mind, however informed on other subjects, while without it, is still deficient in even an idea of what real peace, or truth, or happiness is.”

I wondered at the strength of his delusion, for he often seemed absent and uncomfortable; but he turned from all I said with the most impenetrable indifference.

At last the dreaded time of our separation arrived. Walderford was called home to his father, who was ill; Churchill had the offer of a curacy in the west of England; and I, at my father's desire, was to pay a visit to a friend of his, who had spent a long life in the service of the public, as my father said, and knew men as they really were.

My father's ambition was, that I should distinguish myself in a political life. This had been my own also; but the deep distress I experienced in parting from my friends, particularly my be-

loved Churchill, overcame ambition for the time, and every thing else. Churchill discovered a degree of grief also at parting from me, which I had not thought any earthly deprivation could have cost him.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

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